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The life, letters and work of Frederic Leighton

Mrs. Russell Barrington

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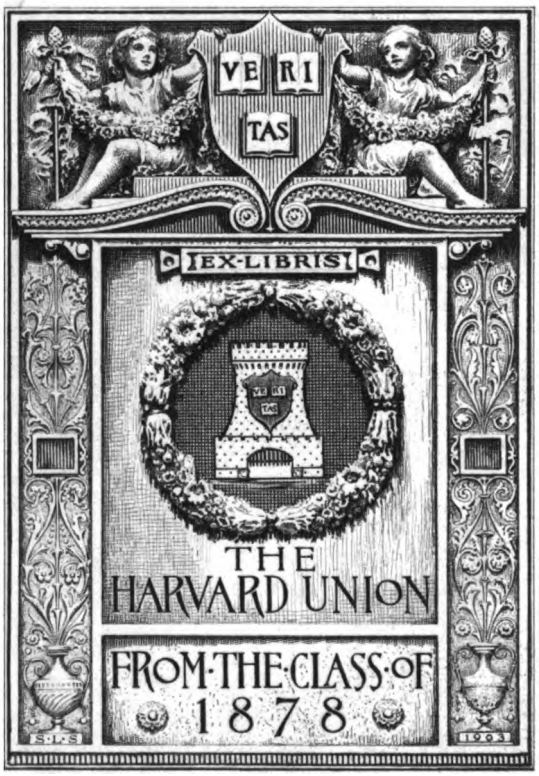

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The Life, Letters and Work of Frederic Baron Leighton

Of Stretton

VOL. I

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"If any man should be constantly penetrated with a gift bestowed on him, it is the artist who has realised as his share a genuine love from nature; for his enjoyment, if he puts his gift to usury, increases with the days of his life."

. . . . . .

"Every man who has received a gift, ought to feel and act as if he was a field in which a seed was planted that others might gather the harvest."

FREDERIC LEIGHTON.

August 1852.

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The Life, Letters and Work of Frederic Leighton

BY

MRS. RUSSELL BARRINGTON
AUTHOR OF "REMINISCENCES OF G. F. WATTS," ETC. ETC.

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I

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THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
1906

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EARLY PORTRAIT OF LORD LEIGHTON

From the Painting by G. F. Watts (Photogravure)

By permission of the Hon. Lady Leighton-Warren and Sir Bryan Leighton, Bart.

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TO ALL WHO HOLD DEAR THE
MEMORY OF FREDERIC LEIGHTON
THIS BOOK IS INSCRIBED WITH
THE AUTHOR'S APOLOGIES FOR
ITS VERY MANY SHORTCOMINGS

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PREFACE

Ten years and more have passed since Leighton died, yet it is still difficult to get sufficiently far away, to take in the whole of his life and being in their just proportion to the world in which he lived.

When we are in Rome, hemmed in by narrow streets, St. Peter's is invisible; once across that wonderful Campagna and mounting the slopes of Frascati, there, like a huge pearl gleaming in the light, rises the dome of the Mother Church. As distance gives the true relation between a lofty building and its suburbs, so time alone can decide the height of the pedestal on which to place the great.

The day after Leighton's death Watts wrote to me:—

". . . The loss to the world is so great that I almost feel ashamed to let my personal grief have so large a place.

"I am glad you knew him so well. I am glad for any one who knew him. No one will ever know such another, alas! alas! alas!

"I am glad you have enjoyed the friendship of one of the greatest men of any time."

This is the estimate of a great artist who knew Leighton for forty years, and for many of those years enjoyed daily intercourse with him.

A few like Watts required no length of time before forming a right estimate of Leighton. They not only knew him to be great, but knew why he was great. Undoubtedly

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as a draughtsman Leighton was unrivalled; but bearing in mind his English contemporaries—Watts, Millais, Holman Hunt, Rossetti, and Burne-Jones—it is not as a painter that even his truest friends would claim for him his right to the exceptional position he undoubtedly occupied.

What was it that gave Leighton this position? He himself was the very last to claim it as a right. His creed and his practice were ever to fight against the weaknesses of his nature rather than to rejoice in its strength. For assuredly, however strong the intellect, beautiful the character, brilliant the vitality, and fine the intuitive instincts, a man may yet have within his nature foibles in common with the herd. The difference is, that in the truly great the unworthier side of nature is viewed as unworthy—is fought against and banished like the plague.

"A good man is wise, not because all his desires are wise, but because his reasonable soul masters unwise desires and is itself wise.

"He is courageous, because he knows when to fight, and does so under control of reason.

"He is temperate, because his pluck and his desires unite in giving the first place to the reasonable soul; and finally, he is just, because each principle is in its place and stops there."

In a letter to his mother when he was twenty-three Leighton wrote: "I feel I have of my nature a very fair share of the hateful worldly weakness of my country people;" adding, "Still, I have found no sufficiently great advantage or compensation for the tedium of going out." Again, three years later, after describing to his sister the delight he felt in the beauty he found in Algiers, he wrote: "And yet what I have said of my feelings, though *literally true*, does not give you an exactly true notion; for, together

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with, and as it were behind, so much pleasurable emotion, there is always that other strange second man in me, calm, observant, critical, unmoved, blasé—odious!

"He is a shadow that walks with me, a sort of nineteenth-century canker of doubt and discretion; it's very, very seldom that I forget his loathsome presence. What cheering things I find to say!"

Doubtless Leighton had within him the possibilities of becoming a worldling, and also of becoming a cynic. He overrode and banished the first as despicable, the second as hideous.

But it is not in the wisdom that—Socrates-like—steered his life by reason, that we find the adequate answer to the question, "Why was Leighton the prominent entity he was?" Diverse as were his natural gifts and his power of achievement on various lines, he differed radically from that modern development—the all-round man, who has no concentrated fire as a centre to illumine his life, but develops all his capacities so that they shall shine forth equally on certain high levels. From childhood Leighton had one overriding passion, and from this sprang the will-force and vitality which throughout his life succeeded in bringing his intentions to fruition. Whatsoever his hand found worthy to do at all, he did with the whole might of his great nature. Still even that would not adequately answer the question. His greatness truly lay in the fact that the choice he made of what was worth doing was never limited by personal interests. He impelled the force of his powers for the welfare of others, and for the causes beneficial to others, as much or more than to those matters which concerned himself alone. Hence his true greatness and his great fame—for Æschylus is right: "The good will prevail."

A sense of duty—"the keenest possible sense of it,"

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to use Mr. Briton Rivière's words—which was the keynote of all Leighton's actions, was impelled in the first instance by a feeling of gratitude for the joy with which beauty in nature and art had steeped his being from a child; a deep well of happiness, a constant companion, ever springing up in his heart, which he craved that others should share with him. This happiness gave sweetness to his life, lovableness to his character, irresistible power to his control. Leighton's was truly a life of praise and gratitude for the joys nature had bestowed on him. He had a pleasant way of making the truth prevail. The description by Marcus Aurelius of his "third man" applies well to the character of Leighton.

"One man, when he has done a service to another, is ready to set it down to his account as a favour conferred. Another is not ready to do this, but still in his own mind he thinks of the man as his debtor, and he knows what he has done. A third in a manner does not even know what he has done, but he is like a vine which has produced grapes, and seeks for nothing more after it has once produced its proper fruit. As a horse when he has run, a dog when he has tracked the game, a bee when it has made the honey, so a man, when he has done a good act, does not call out for others to come and see, but he goes on to another act, as a vine goes on to produce again the grapes in season."

Leighton's work in every direction was complete work, because his mind grasped completely the proportion and aspect of everything he undertook. His inborn affection for, and sympathy with, his fellow-creatures impelled him to feel that the area of self-interest, however gifted that self might be, was too restricted for him to find full completeness therein. This could only be attained by working with and for others. Such feelings and doctrines are common in religious and philanthropic men; but in the ego of the modern artist there

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is generally something which seems to demand a concentration of attention on his own ego in order to develop his gifts as an artist. The attitude of Leighton towards his own work, and towards that of others, was essentially contrary to this concentration.

In his letters to his mother, and to his master, Eduard von Steinle, are found the bases on which the superstructure of his after career rested, the underpinning of that monumental feature of the Victorian era—namely, in unflagging industry, in ever striving to make his life worthy of the beauty and dignity of his vocation as an artist, and in ever endeavouring to make his work an adequate exponent of "the mysterious treasure that was laid up in his heart": his passion for beauty.

In my attempt to write Leighton's life I have purposely devoted more space to the earlier than to the later years of his career as an artist. With an artist more than with others is it specially true that the boy is father to the man; and if Leighton's example is in any way to benefit students of art, the early struggles, the failures, more even than the successes, will teach the lesson that there is no short cut on the road which has to be travelled even by the most gifted. From the family letters and those to his master, which are, with a few exceptions, given in full, it will also be seen that, however high was the pedestal on which Leighton placed his mistress Art, he felt keenly likewise the beauty of his family relationships, and a deep, grateful affection for the master who had given him his start on the road to fame.

If this endeavour to present a true picture of Leighton the man has any value, it is owing mainly to the fact that Mrs. Matthews has placed at my disposal the family and other letters in her possession,—an act which demands the thanks of all those who are interested in the fame of her brother.

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I also wish to acknowledge with gratitude the considerate kindness of several of Leighton's friends in contributing "notes" and letters, which are of true value in bringing before the public a right view of the man and of the artist. First and foremost among these contributors must be placed Dr. von Steinle, son of Professor Eduard von Steinle of Frankfort-on-Main, the beloved master to whom Leighton in 1879 referred as "*the indelible seal*," when writing of those who had influenced him most for good. The first letter of the correspondence which was carried on between the master and pupil, and preserved preciously by each, is dated August 31, 1852, the last 1883. Only second in interest to this correspondence, which discloses Leighton's intimate feelings and aspirations as an artist, are the notes supplied by Mr. Briton Rivière, R.A.—notes which could only have been written by one whose own nature in many ways was closely attuned to that of Leighton's, and which give the intimate aspect of Leighton as an official. "It would be difficult for any one," writes Mr. Briton Rivière, "to give in a short space any adequate account of a character so full and complex as Leighton's." And indeed it would require a great deal more than two volumes even to touch on all the events of this eventful life, which might further illustrate Leighton's character; but Mr. Briton Rivière has noted certain salient characteristics of his friend with a sympathy, and a fine touch, which I think will prove of very rare interest in this record. The tribute to Leighton of Mr. Hamo Thornycroft, R.A. (from a sculptor's point of view), carries great weight, and gives also, as does that of another old comrade in the Artists Volunteer Corps, an appreciative account of Leighton as the soldier. To these, to Lady Loch, the Hon. Mrs. Alfred Sartoris, Sir William Richmond, R.A., Mr. Walter Crane, Mr. Alfred East, P.R.B.A.,

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I offer my thanks for so kindly contributing notes which help to solve the problems presented by "a character so full and so complex." For courteous permission to publish letters I wish to express my thanks to Alice, Countess of Strafford, the executor of Mr. Henry Greville, who was one of, if not the most intimate of the friends who loved Leighton; the Hon. Mrs. Leigh, Mrs. Fanny Kemble's daughter and executor; the Right Hon. Sir Charles Dilke, executor of Mrs. Mark Pattison (afterwards Lady Dilke); the Right Hon. John Morley, Dr. von Steinle, Mr. John Hanson Walker, Mr. Cartwright, Mr. Robert Barrett Browning, Professor Church, Mr. T. C. Horsfall, and Mrs. Street, daughter of the late Mr. Henry Wells, R.A.; the executor of George Eliot, Mrs. Charles Lewes; and the executors of John Ruskin. There are many other letters and notes of interest which have been preserved by Mrs. Matthews, but which cannot be inserted for want of space. Among these are affectionate notes from Joachim, Burne-Jones, Hebert, Robert Fleury, Meissonier, Gérome, Tullio Massarani; also friendly letters from Cardinal Manning, Viscount Wolseley, Sarah Bernhardt, John Tyndall, Froude, Anthony Trollope, Sir John Gilbert, Lady Waterford, and Lord Strangford. A number of letters exist from members of the Royal Family to Leighton, all evincing alike admiration for the artist and an affectionate appreciation of the man.

In these pages there will be found a repetition of several sentences. This is intentional. Watts would often remark, "A really wise and true saying can't be repeated too often"; and in Leighton's letters are several tallying with this description, which it would be a pity to detach from their own context, and yet which are also required elsewhere to enforce the argument.

As regards the kindness shown in allowing reproductions

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of pictures, I have to tender my loyal gratitude to the Queen for the gracious loan of the picture presented to her Majesty by Leighton; also to the Prince of Wales for allowing the "Head of a Girl," given to his Royal Highness as a wedding present by the artist, to be reproduced in these pages.

Other owners of pictures to whom I proffer also my warm thanks are Lord Armstrong, Lord Pirrie, the Rt. Hon. Joseph Chamberlain, the Hon. Lady Leighton Warren, Sir Bryan Leighton, the Hon. Mrs. Sartoris, Sir Elliot Lees, Sir Alexander Henderson, Mr. E. and Miss I'Anson, Mr. S. Pepys Cockerell, Mr. T. Blake Wirgman, Mrs. Stewart Hodgson, Mr. Hanson Walker, Mrs. Henry Joachim, Mrs. Stephenson Clarke, Mrs. C. E. Lees, Mrs. James Watney, Mr. Hodges, Mrs. Charles Lewes, Mr. H. S. Mendelssohn, Mr. Phillipson, and Dr. von Steinle.

Also to the Fine Art Society, the Berlin Photographic Co., Messrs. Agnew & Son, Messrs. P. & D. Colnaghi, Messrs. Henry Graves, Messrs. Lefevre, Messrs. Smith, Elder, & Co., and the directors of the Leicester Galleries.

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THE LIFE OF LORD LEIGHTON

[illegible], sincerity, and zeal for his special vocation, that his influence as an official was never deadened by theoretic red-tapeism, nor by secondary or side issues. Leighton ever

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ERRATA

Page 67, line 31, *for* "unscorched," *read* "sunscorched."
„ 103, „ 31, *for* "worse that," *read* "worse than."
„ 169, „ 8, *for* "Pantaleoni," *read* "Pantaleone."
„ 213, lines 6, 7, *for* "owing . . . from," *read* "owing . . . to."
„ 265, note. The reference number should be to "Edward," instead of to "Adelaide."
„ 296, line 17, *for* "Couture," *read* "Conture."

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THE LIFE OF LORD LEIGHTON

INTRODUCTION

In 1860, when Leighton, at the age of thirty, definitely settled in England, art was alive in two distinctly new directions. Ruskin was writing, the Pre-Raphaelites were painting, and Prince Albert, besides encouraging individual painters and sculptors, had, through his fine taste and the exercise of his patronage in every branch of art, developed an interest in good design as it can be carried out in manufactures and various crafts. Leighton followed the Prince Consort's initiatory lead; and, by showing the same cultured and catholic zeal in her welfare, was enabled to continue and develop Prince Albert's important work, thereby widening and elevating the whole outlook of art in England.

It has at times been asserted that Leighton was greater as a President of the Royal Academy than he was as a painter. It would be truer, I think, to say that it was because he was so great as an artist in the highest, widest meaning of the word, so sincere a workman, that he stands unrivalled as a President. In a letter to a friend, dated May 1888, ten years after he had been elected President, he wrote, "I am a workman first and an official afterwards," and it was, I believe, because he carried into his official duties the true artist's warmth, sincerity, and zeal for his special vocation, that his influence as an official was never deadened by theoretic red-tapeism, nor by secondary or side issues. Leighton ever

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flew straight to the mark, and the mark he aimed at in his presidential work was ever the highest essential point from the view he also took as an artist. His official duties, carried out with so great an amount of scrupulous conscientiousness, would have gone far to fill the entire life of an ordinary human being; yet these duties were, to the last, subordinated in his personal existence to his self-imposed duties as a painter and a sculptor.

The words, "I am a workman first and an official afterwards," epitomise the creed of his life. From earliest childhood art had cast over Leighton's nature a glamour which made his heart-service to her the great passion of his life. His "great nature" had in it many sources of stirring interest and of pure delights, which he enjoyed keenly; but nothing came in sight, so to speak, which ever for a moment seriously challenged a rivalry with the salient ruling passion. His character, as it developed, wound itself round it; his strongest sense of duty focalised itself in its service; his ambition ever was more inspired and stimulated by a devotion to the best interests of art than by any purely personal incentive. Leighton was an artist of that true type in whom no influence whatsoever can deter or slacken incessant zeal for work. In the deepest recesses of his nature burnt the unquenchable fire, the paramount longing to follow in Nature's footsteps, and to create things of beauty. Among the many loyal servants who have dutifully worshipped at the shrine of art, never was there one who more completely devoted the best that was in him to her service.

"Va! your human talk and doings are a tame jest; the only passionate life is in form and colour."[1]

Leighton's nature may be viewed from three aspects. Though each aspect is apparently detached from the others, it would be impossible to record a true portrait were the three not kept in view while attempting to draw the picture.

[1] George Eliot—"Romola."

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First, there was Leighton, the great man, the public servant, gifted with exceptional powers of intellect and character, who attained the highest social position ever reached by an English artist; the Leighton the world knew, whose sway was paramount in the many councils and assemblies to which he belonged no less than when fulfilling his duties as President of the Royal Academy, and whose helpfulness and zeal in promoting the extension of a knowledge and appreciation of English art in foreign countries and in the colonies became proverbial. Lady Loch tells of his invaluable help in the efforts she and her husband made to encourage art, while the late Lord Loch was Governor of the Isle of Man, of Victoria, and of Cape Colony. "I feel it would be impossible," she writes, "to convey in a few words what a wonderful friend Frederic Leighton was to my husband from the time he first knew him,[1] forty years before Leighton's death, and to myself from the time we married. He was always ready to help us at every turn. Any deserving artist whom we sent to him would be certain to find in him a friend. When we arranged the very small Art Exhibition in the Isle of Man, you could hardly imagine with what energy and thoughtfulness he entered into the matter, impressing upon us all the steps that we ought to take in order to secure its success, even to the details, such as packing and insuring the pictures. He himself sent us pictures for the Exhibition, and guided our judgment in admiring and caring for those which were best and most to be valued, with a paternal care and zeal not describable. Again, when we were in Australia, and the great International Centennial Exhibition in Melbourne took place in 1888, Frederic Leighton selected such a good collection of pictures that they simply were the saving of the Exhibition financially—they attracted such continuous crowds of visitors. Subsequently, when an exhibition

[1] Lord Loch's cousin, Colonel Sutherland Orr, married Leighton's elder sister in the year 1857.

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of ceramic work was asked for in Melbourne, and Henry Loch wrote to consult his friend, amidst all Frederic Leighton's important work and duties, he rushed about and secured a most interesting collection of all kinds of china and pottery, which was greatly appreciated by the Australians. Again, in 1892, he formed a Fine Art Committee, consisting of himself, who was appointed Chairman, Sir Charles Mills, Sir Donald Currie, M.P., Mr. W. W. Ouless, R.A., Mr. Colin Hunter, A.R.A., Mr. Frank Walton, and Mr. Prange, to select pictures to send for exhibition at Kimberley. Besides a picture lent by Queen Victoria, at Leighton's request, of the portraits of herself and the royal family by Winterhalter, and four by Leighton, which he lent, the Committee secured 181 pictures, though not without great difficulty, Leighton told us, because the artists were afraid their works would be injured by the burning sun, the sandstorms, and the rough journey up from the Cape. Owing, however, to Leighton's untiring exertions, a very interesting and successful exhibition took place in this then little known town of our English colony in Africa."

On the day Leighton died, Watts, his near neighbour and fellow-workman, in a letter to a friend, wrote that he had enjoyed "an uninterrupted and affectionate friendship of five-and-forty years" with Leighton. He continues: "No one will ever know such another. A magnificent intellectual capacity, an unerring and instantaneous spring upon the point to unravel, a generosity, a sympathy, a tact, a lovable and sweet reasonableness, yet no weakness. For my own part—and I tell you, life can never be the same to me again—my own grief is merged in the sense I have of the appalling loss to the nation; it seems to me to be no less."[1] Later, Watts wished it recorded that Leighton's character was the most beautiful he had ever known. This tribute from the great veteran artist, thirteen years Leighton's senior, but who

[1] Quoted in G. F. Watts' "Reminiscences."

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outlived him more than eight years, was echoed far and wide by many at the time of Leighton's death. To his powers and influence, exercised in the Royal Academy as a body and to the members individually, Mr. Briton Rivière, the painter, and Mr. Hamo Thornycroft, the sculptor, give the following appreciative tributes.

Mr. Briton Rivière writes:—

"To begin with, I never really knew him—though we had met several times before—until I began to serve upon the Council with him very soon after his election as President. This at once brought us into very intimate relations, and a very few meetings convinced me that his opinions and actions on that body were invariably regulated by a true spirit of absolute justice and fairness to all, and that if he had his own particular art beliefs—which he certainly had, for art was to him almost a religion, and his own particular belief almost a creed—he never allowed it to bias him in the least. Indeed, I have never worked with any one who exhibited a broader or more catholic spirit of tolerance, even sympathy with all schools, however diverse from his own, only demanding honesty and sincerity should be the basis of each kind of work.

"I have always felt that no one, who had heard only his elaborately prepared speeches, knew his real power as a speaker.

"He was a master of time. I do not think he ever failed to keep an appointment almost to the minute. He was seldom much too early, but never too late.

"He was an ideal president for any institution, and after serving under him for many years, I cannot think of any one faculty which a president should possess, which Leighton wanted."

Mr. Hamo Thornycroft writes:—

"My earliest recollection of Leighton was in 1869, when,

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with several other young art students, I went to his studio. He had promised to criticise the designs we had made from Morris' 'Life and Death of Jason.' This he did most admirably, it seemed to me, and most sympathetically, devoting considerable time to each; and I came away encouraged and a sworn devotee of the great man.

"For the next few years, I had the benefit of his teaching at the Academy Schools, where he was most energetic as a visitor, and took the greatest pains to help the students. He was, moreover, an *inspiring* master. Besides doing much for the school of sculpture, till then much neglected, he started a custom of giving a certain time to the study of drapery on the living model. His knowledge in this department and his excellent method were a new element in the training in the schools, and soon had a salutary effect upon the work done by the students. His influence, through the Academy Schools, upon the younger generation of sculptors was very great. There can be no doubt whatever that the rapid advance made in the art of sculpture during the last thirty years was to a considerable extent due to the sympathy and the interest which Leighton gave to it.

"Leighton, as is well known, carefully prepared his important speeches, like many great speakers; but I never saw him fail, or even hesitate, when called upon to speak unexpectedly. At meetings of the Academy Council or at the general assemblies, his summing up and his weighing of the arguments brought forward by members in course of discussion was always masterly, just and eloquent. He had such a great sense of proportion, and detected what was the essence and the essential part of a speaker's argument."

At a meeting held in Leighton's studio, after his death in May 1896, for the purpose of furthering the scheme of preserving the house for the nation as a memorial to the great

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artist, the sculptor, Mr. Alfred Gilbert, R.A., on rising to speak, said he felt too much on the occasion to be able to make a speech, adding, "I can only say that all I know, and all the little I have been able to do as a sculptor, I owe to Leighton."

In a letter, dated February 9, 1896, Watts again writes: "I delighted in shaping a splendid career of incalculable benefit to his (Leighton's) epoch. His abilities, his persuasiveness, the peculiar range of his cultivation, would have fitted him to accompany a delicate embassy, where his efficiency would have been made evident, establishing a right to be entrusted with the like as its head; I believe something of this and more, if there could be more, was for him in the future. You know, I always looked forward to his seat in the House of Lords. That came about, and I believe the rest was but a question of time. Feeling this, you can understand that my own grief seems to me to be selfish. I am glad you enjoyed the friendship of one of the greatest men of any time."

In the speech which the King, then Prince of Wales, made at the first banquet held after Leighton's death, on May 1, 1897, His Majesty referred to the late President in the following words:—

"All of us in the room, and I especially, must miss one whose eloquent voice was so often heard at this banquet—a voice, alas! now hushed for ever. It is unnecessary, as it would be almost impertinent in me, to hold forth in praise of the merits and virtues of Lord Leighton. They are known to you all. He has left a great name behind him, and he himself will be regretted not only by the great artistic world, but by the whole nation. I myself had the advantage of knowing him for a great number of years—ever since I was a boy—and I need hardly say how deeply I deplore the fact that he can be no more in our midst. But his name will be cherished and honoured throughout the country."

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It is not necessary to dwell more lengthily on this salient aspect of Leighton. During his lifetime it was public property, the great name he has left is evidence sufficient to coming generations.

Secondly, as portrayed chiefly by his human qualities, there was the aspect of Leighton as his family and his friends knew him; the beloved Leighton, the delightful companion, the charming personality, the being whose brilliant vitality brought a mental stimulus into all intercourse with him. The Leighton *qui savait vivre* perhaps better than did ever any other conspicuous, overworked servant of the public; an active, positive influence, radiating strength and sunshine by his presence; and playing the game—whatever game it was—better than even the experts in special games. In that which perhaps he played best, lay his remarkable social power. Leighton had a deep-rooted and ingenuous sincerity of nature, and never for a moment lost his self-centre; yet he had the rare gift of unlocking the side most worthy to be unlocked in the nature of his companion of the moment. He had the power of evolving out of most people he met something that was real and of interest. Never giving himself away, he yet managed to meet other individualities on any ground that existed which could by any possibility be made a mutual ground. Though generosity itself in believing the best of every one, and at times entrapped by the wily, anything like flattery was a vice in his eyes. He neither gave himself away, nor induced others to give themselves away while in his company, and would always abstain from obtruding his opinions, modestly withholding judgment where he saw neither a duty nor a distinct reason to pronounce.

Perhaps the strongest mark of Leighton's true distinction lay in the fact that, notwithstanding his reserve on all matters of deep feeling, notwithstanding his love of form in the living of life as in the creating of art, notwithstanding the

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perpetually shifting and urgent claims which, as a public man and a prominent social entity, were being continually forced upon him, the inner entity, the real Leighton, remained to the end a child of nature. No need was there for him to gauge the proportionate merit of the various conflicting influences that played on his complicated life; his own instinctive preferences clenched the matter indubitably, asserting that the noblest grace and the finest taste lay in the spontaneous and the natural. When Watts wished it recorded that Leighton's nature was the most beautiful he had ever known, he referred, I think, more specially to that lovable, kind-hearted ingenuousness and noble simplicity which were its deepest roots, notwithstanding a life of conflicts, ambitions, and unparalleled success. There are among those who most honour and love Leighton's memory, and who felt most keenly his loss, poor and unsuccessful artists and students, of whom the world has never heard, but to whom the great President gave of his very best in advice and sympathy.[1] He never posed, though he was an adept in catching the atmosphere of a situation,

[1] An incident, one out of many that tell of Leighton's hearty, eager helpfulness, happened on one of the evenings at the Academy, after the prizes had been given away. A student was passing through the first room, on his way to the entrance. He looked the picture of dejection and disappointed wretchedness, poorly and shabbily dressed, and slinking away as if he wished to pass out of the place unnoticed. Millais and Leighton, walking arm in arm, came along, pictures of prosperity. Leighton caught sight of the poor, downcast student. Leaving Millais, he darted across the vestibule to him, and, taking the student's arm, drew him back into the first room, and made him sit down on the ottoman beside him. Putting his arm on the top of the ottoman, and resting his head on his hand, Leighton began to talk as he alone could talk; pouring forth volumes of earnest, rapid utterances, as if everything in the world depended on his words conveying what he wanted them to convey. He went on and on. The shabby figure gradually seemed to pull itself together, and, at last, when they both rose, he seemed to have become another creature. Leighton shook hands with him, and the youth went on his way rejoicing. It is certain that if other help than advice were needed, it was given. But it was the extraordinary zest and vitality which Leighton put into his help which made it unlike any other. He fought every one's cause even better than others fight their own.

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however new and foreign to his usual beat such a situation might be. Scrupulous in his attitude of reverence towards his vocation as an artist, *ever* most scrupulous to render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, the inner core of the nature remained simple and unstained by worldliness.

Then there was the third aspect of Leighton, the Leighton at times half-hidden from himself; the yearning, unsatisfied spirit, which, though subject at times to great elevations of delight, at others was also the victim of profound depressions and a sense of loneliness—a state of being born out of that strange, only half-explained region whence proceed all intuitive faculties. Such states are referred to occasionally in his letters to his mother, and we find their influence recorded at intervals in his art. In 1849, on a sketch of Giotto when a boy, are written in the corner the words "Sehnsucht"; in 1865, there is the David, "Oh, that I had wings like a dove; for then would I fly away and be at rest"; in 1894, the "Spirit of the Summit"—these are all alike expressions of the home-sickness that yearned for an abiding resting-place not found in the conditions of this world. "Oh, what a disappointing world it is!" were words he uttered shortly before his death. In 1894, when at Bayreuth, a friend was congratulating him on his ever fortunate star having even there easily overcome the difficulties of the crowd. Leighton, passing over the immediate question, answered with a striking serious sadness, "I have not *ever* got what I most wanted in this world."

No mind was ever more explicit to itself in its mental working, than was his with regard to matters which the intellect can investigate and solve. His judgment could never be warped by reason of an insufficient brain apparatus with which to judge himself and others impartially. But Leighton was a great man, beyond being the one who owned "a magnificent intellectual capacity." The qualities he possessed, which made

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him a prominent entity who influenced the interests of the world at large, secured for him a footing on that higher level where human nature breathes a finer, more rarefied atmosphere than that in which the intellect alone disports itself; a level from which can be viewed the just proportion existing between the truly great and the truly little. Selfishness disappears in a nature such as Leighton possessed, when that level is reached. The necessity for self-sacrifice forces itself so peremptorily, that there is no struggle to be gone through in exercising it. For instance—notwithstanding the absorbing nature of his occupations and the intense devotion he felt towards his vocation as an artist, when it was a question of the country needing a reserve force for her army to draw on in case of war—a need which is at this present moment insisted on by Lord Roberts with such zealous earnestness—Leighton at once seized the importance of the question, and, at whatever sacrifice to his own more personal interests, enlisted as a volunteer, and mastered the art and duties of soldiering so completely that many officers in the regular army envied his knowledge and efficiency.

The following is an appreciation by an old comrade in the Artists' Volunteer Corps:—

"The names of those who first enrolled themselves to form the Artists' Volunteer Corps in 1860 is a record of considerable interest in itself, and calls back many reminiscences connected with art. Leighton joined May 10, 1860, and was in a few days given his commission as ensign.

"Probably the very character of the first recruits tended to prevent that expansion and accession of numbers without which no military body can flourish. Lord Bury, the first commandant, became the Colonel of the Civil Service Rifles; and whatever attention may have been given to firing and detailed training, the early appearances of the 'Artists' in

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public at reviews was, as a rule, as a company or two attached to the Civil Service Rifle Corps.

"Events, however, brought a change in the command, and Leighton having, not without hesitation, accepted it, set himself at once to introduce reforms. The Captains, he announced, were to be responsible each for the command and drill of his company. He, to carry out before promotion as Major Commanding a duty which the previous laxity had never required of him, learned the company drill by heart and went through the whole complicated system then existing, on a single evening under trying circumstances in very insufficient space. Reorganisation did not rapidly fill the ranks, and there was much hard work to be done before the Artists' Corps appeared as a completed eight-company battalion, and took its place among the best of the Volunteer Corps of the Metropolis. The personality of the Commander did very much to achieve this result, and Leighton became Lieutenant-Colonel Commandant in 1876.

"Next to his duty to his Art and to the Royal Academy, as he was ever careful to say, he esteemed his duty in the Corps. Busy man, with his time mapped out more than most, he was always accessible and ready to give the necessary time to those who had access to him on the Corps business. He never appeared on parade without previous study of the drill to be gone through, while his tact, energy, and personal charm were brought out and used at those social meetings with officers and with men which do so much to build up the tone of a volunteer body.

"Of camps and duties in the tented field he took his part cheerfully. He shared the hardship of the early experience of the detachment at the Dartmoor Manœuvres, where, camping on the barren hills above the lower level of the mist, the extemporised commissariat followed with difficulty, and the officers consoled themselves for the roughness of their

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fare by the consumption of marmalade, which happened to be supplied in bulk, and had to clean their knives in the sand to make some show for the entertainment of the Brigadier at such dinner as could be had.

"Regarding volunteering so earnestly as he did, the reports of the Inspecting Officers would appear of great importance in Leighton's eyes. On one occasion paragraphs had appeared in the papers about the Corps which probably gave some umbrage to the authorities. The Inspecting Officer kept the battalion an unconscionable time at drill, changed the command, fell out the Staff Sergeants, yet all went well. At length, with Leighton again in command, and a word imperfectly heard, the square walked outwards in four directions. The confusion was put to rights, and the well-prepared speech from the Inspecting Officer as to the importance of battalion drills, &c., followed. It was quite a pleasure to point out to the distressed Leighton that the whole was manifestly a 'put up thing.'

"The answer he received on another occasion admitted of no misinterpretation. Riding with the Officer after the inspection, and anxious to know whether in his opinion he was really doing any good work by his volunteering, Leighton asked whether the Officer would be willing to take the battalion he had just inspected under fire, and received the laconic reply, 'Yes, sir, hell fire.'

"On Leighton's election as President of the Academy, his twenty-five years active service in the Corps ceased in 1883. All the time that the history of the volunteering of the nineteenth century is known, his name will be associated with the Artists' Corps to the honour of both."

Mr. Hamo Thornycroft, R.A., also adds his tribute in the following lines:—

"I should think that few Commanding Officers of Volunteer Regiments could surpass Colonel Leighton in efficiency.

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His wonderful knowledge of infantry drill, and the decision with which he gave the word of command, made it very easy for the men in the ranks to obey him; and the quickness of eye with which he detected an error in any movement frequently saved confusion in the ranks on a field day. The Artists' Corps soon became one of the smartest in London. I well remember how efficiently he commanded the Volunteer Battalion in the Army Manœuvres on Dartmoor in 1876, when for a fortnight of almost continuous rain on that wild moorland he kept us all happy and full of respect for him by his fine soldierly example. His thoroughness and kindness were constant. After a soaking wet night he would come down the line of tents in the early morning distributing some unheard-of luxury, such as a couple of new-laid eggs to each man, which he had managed to have sent from some outlying village."

Besides the obvious results of a complex and astonishingly comprehensive nature, there were also phases in Leighton's life which were the outcome on that side of his being half hidden to himself.

Most of us have dual natures, not only in the sense that good and bad reside within us simultaneously, but we have also a less definable duality of nature; nature's original creature being one thing, and the creature developed by the conditions it meets with in its journey through life, another. Each acts and reacts on the other. We meet the conditions forced upon us in life from the point of our own individualities. On the other hand, the original creature gets twisted by circumstances and the influence of other personalities, and becomes partially altered into a different person. This backwards and forwards swaying of the influence of nature and circumstances helps to make life the intricate business it is. In the case of highly gifted human beings there seem to be further complications, arising chiefly, perhaps, from the fact that these form so small

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a minority. Very subtle and undefinable is the effect of such gifts on the character and nature of those possessing them, for nature herself maintains a kind of secrecy and endows her favoured ones with but a half consciousness in respect of them. She gives to the artist and to the poet the something, unshared with the ordinary mortal, which controls the inner core of his being, and which is another quantity to be allowed for in his contact with his fellows. It initiates his most passionate, peremptory conditions of temperament, yet it remains partially veiled to himself, in so far that he cannot explain it, nor give it its right place, any more than the lover can explain the glamour which is spread over life by an overpowering first love. When Plato classes the souls of the philosopher, the artist, the musician, and the lover together[1] as having been born to see most of truth, he recognises the same inspired instinctive quality in the artist as in the lover. In the artist is linked, as part of its separateness from the rest of the community, the inseparable shyness of the lover. Anything is better than to expose the sacred, indescribable treasure to the indifferent stare of the uninitiated. We find every sort of ruse adopted by lovers and artists to avoid being forced into explicitness on so tender, so intimate a passion; so convincing to its possessor, so impossible of full explanation to those who possess it not. The necessity to give it a clear outline is only forced when a danger arises of the lover being robbed of his mistress, the artist of his vocation; then the will, propelled by

[1] In Plato's "Phaedrus," Socrates says: "The soul, which has seen most of trouble, shall come to the birth as a philosopher, or artist, or musician, or lover; that which has seen truth in the second degree, shall be a righteous king, or warrior, or lord; the soul which is of the third class, shall be a politician, or economist, or trader; the fourth, shall be a lover of gymnastic toils, or a physician; the fifth, a prophet, or hierophant; to the sixth, a poet or imitator will be 'appropriate'; to the seventh, the life of an artisan, or husbandman; to the eighth, that of a sophist, or demagogue; to the ninth, that of a tyrant; all these are states of probation, in which he who lives righteously, improves, and he who lives unrighteously, deteriorates his lot."

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the all-conquering love, asserts itself, and difficulties have to succumb before it.

Such was the result of opposition in Leighton's case. From early childhood he was known to care for nothing so much as for drawing, and his talent attracted notice and pleased his family, every encouragement being given him by his parents in his studies. It was only when, as a boy of twelve, he viewed art as the serious work of his future life, and when this view was met by the authorities as one not to be encouraged, that the strong passion of his nature asserted its rights. Clearly in opposition are planted the firmest roots of those inevitable developments which make the great of the world great. In Leighton was nurtured that sense of responsibility towards his vocation, so salient a characteristic throughout his career, partly by his father's attitude towards the worship of his nature for beauty and for her exponent art. To prove that his self-chosen labour was no mere play work, no mere avoiding the hard work of life and the duller paths of service generally recognised only as of serious use to mankind, for a game which was a mere pleasure, was a strong additional incentive to Leighton's own high aspirations, inspiring him yet more to treat the development of his gifts as a moral responsibility. He considered it almost in the light of a debt owing to those to whom he was attached by strong family affection, that he should prove good his cause. Though he fought and overcame, having once won his point, he did his utmost to satisfy his father's ambition for him, and to be "eminent."

On August 5, 1879, he wrote to Mrs. Mark Pattison, who was compiling notes for an article on his life: "My father, of his own impulse, sat down to write a few jottings, which I cannot resist sending you, because I was touched at the thought in this kind old man of eighty. *He*, by the way, *is* a fine scholar, and was, at his best, a man of exceptional

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LORD LEIGHTON'S FATHER LORD LEIGHTON'S MOTHER

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intellectual powers. My desire to be an artist dates as far back as my memory, and was wholly spontaneous, or rather unprompted. My parents surrounded me with every facility to learn drawing, but, as I have told you, *strongly* discountenanced the idea of my being an artist unless I could be eminent in art."

Still—though to excel was Leighton's aim, in order to satisfy his father's and also his own ambition—within the hidden recesses of that aim lay the reverent, more single-hearted worship for his mistress Art—seldom unveiled, it would seem, when with his father, to whose purely intellectual and philosophical attitude of mind it would not have appealed. Those alone possessed the key to that inner sanctuary who did not need the key; who wanted no introduction, and were not merely sympathisers, but native inhabitants. There is a freemasonry between the inmates of these places remote from the world's usual habitations, and these, naturally, have a horror of vaunting the possession of a sacred ground to the outsider, the uninitiated. Many of Leighton's most intimate acquaintances gathered no clue, through their knowledge of him, of the existence of the secluded spot. Dr. Leighton's influence, however, non-artistic as was his nature, stimulated his son's natural mental elasticity, encouraging a comprehensive and unprejudiced view of life and people, a view which marked Leighton's undertakings with a stamp of nobility and distinction throughout his career. Yet further—the intellectual training he received in youth probably enlarged, in some respects, the areas of the sacred sanctuary itself, enabling Leighton, when he was the servant of the public and possessing wide influence and patronage, not only to exercise power with the qualities which spring from a high intellectual development, but to mellow with wisdom the guidance of the yet higher sympathies of the heart, when helping those staggering along the road which he himself had travelled over with

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such success. To many, however, especially to those possessing the artistic temperament, it must always remain, to say the least, a questionable advantage to a student of art that his intellectual faculties should be forced forward at the expense of the development of his more emotional and ingenuous instincts, at the age when sensitiveness to receive impressions is keenest, and when such impressions have the most lasting power in moulding the future tendencies of his nature. Certainly the effects of a development of critical and analytical faculties is apt to prove a damper to those ecstasies of enthusiasm which inspire the most convincing conceptions in art. When first starting and facing seriously his independent career alone, Leighton writes to his mother: "I wish that I had a mind, simple and unconscious as a child." Again, writing to his elder sister from Algiers in 1857, after describing the delightful impression produced by a first visit to an Eastern country, he adds: "And yet what I have said of my feelings, though *literally true*, does not give you an exactly true notion, for together with, and as it were behind, so much pleasurable emotion, there is always that other strange second man in me, calm, observant, critical, unmoved, blasé—odious! He is a shadow that walks with me, a sort of nineteenth-century canker of doubt and dissection; it's very, very seldom that I forget his loathsome presence. What cheering things I find to say!"

Allied to the third, more intimate aspect of his nature were phases in Leighton's feelings when heart would seem to conquer head. He would at times indulge in what might almost be designated as a self-imposed blindness, when he would allow of no criticism by himself or others of the cause or person in question. An enthusiastic, unselfish devotion, a sense of chivalry or pity, would override his normally clear-sighted, intellectual acumen. Having set his belief and admiration

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EARLY PICTURE OF BOY RESCUING SLEEPING BABY
FROM EAGLE
Leighton House Collection

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EARLY PICTURE OF BOY RESCUING SLEEPING BABY FROM EAGLE

Leighton House Collection

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to one tune, faithful loyalty—and maybe a certain amount of obstinacy—would bind him fast in an adherence to the same.

Belonging also to the intuitive, more emotional side of his nature, was the curiously strong influence places exercised over him, certain localities affecting him and exciting his sympathies with a strong power.

In 1857 he wrote to his elder sister: "If I am as faithful to my wife as I am to the places I love, I shall do very well!"

In order to seize fully Leighton's complete individuality, an understanding of Italy, his "second home," is perhaps necessary—a conception of the nature of the unsophisticated Italian life which fascinated him so greatly when as yet no invasion had been made of cosmopolitan, so-called civilisation. As a magnet, Italy drew Leighton to her.[1] Under the influence of her radiant beauty, breathing such a life of charm and colour beneath sunlit skies, he felt the sources of happiness in his own nature expand and his powers ripen. In the fertility of her soil, the vitality of her people, the superb quality of her art—fine and gracious in its perfection, and distributed

[1] He wrote to his sister in 1857 from Algiers: "I shall spend my next winter in my dear, dear old Rome, to which I am attached beyond measure; indeed, Italy altogether has a hold on my heart that no other country ever can have (except, of course, my own), and although, as I just now said, I was most delighted with Africa, and have not a moment to look back to that was not agreeable, yet there is an intimate little corner in my affections into which it could never penetrate." And later he wrote in a letter to his mother: "I have so often been to Italy, and so often written to you from thence, that it seems quite a platitude to tell you how much I enjoy it, and what a keen delight I felt again this time when I once more trod the soil of this wonderful country; indeed, by the time you get this you will already yourself be in full enjoyment of its pleasures, and though naturally you cannot feel one tittle of my attachment and yearning affection for it, yet you will have all the physical delights of sun and serene skies and a good share of the wonder and admiration at the inexhaustible natural beauties of this garden of the world. I came through Switzerland this time, but as quick as a shot, as I was in a hurry to get *home* to Italy."

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generously throughout the length and breadth of her land—he experienced influences which intensified his emotions and vivified his imagination. The child-like charm of her people, so spontaneously happy, enjoying the ease and assurance of nature's own aristocracy, because enjoying nature's generous gifts with unabashed fulness of sensation, in whom are non-existent those sensibilities which create self-consciousness, restraint, and an absence of self-confidence, aroused in Leighton an interest deeper than mere pleasure. It was to him like the joy of a yearning satisfied, as of those who, having had their lot cast for years with aliens and foreigners, find themselves again with their own kith and kin, surrounded by the native atmosphere which had lent such enchantment to childhood. Again and again he returned to Italy to be made happy, to be revived, to be strengthened by her. Her influence became kneaded into his very being, not only nourishing his sense of beauty and rendering more complete the artist nature within him, but touching the sources from which his artist temperament sprang, inspiring his very personality and changing it into one which was certainly not typically English. His rapid utterance, his picturesque gesture, his very appearance, were not emphatically English.[1]

Certain Englishmen who knew Leighton but slightly felt out of sympathy with him for this reason, experiencing a difficulty in recognising him as one of themselves. It was, however, only on the surface that a difference existed. Once intimate with Leighton, he was ever found to be *au fond* English of the English. After the age of thirty it was in England Leighton fought the serious battle of life—Italy was but the playground, though a playground of such fascination

[1] Du Maurier, who took much interest in tracing indications of various racial distinctions in the remarkable people of his time, was troubled on this point. He was convinced that in Leighton existed indications of foreign or Jewish blood, but was quite unable to discover any facts in support of this theory.

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to him that the glamour of it was spread over the working hours no less than over the holidays. In these days we have to go into the smaller towns and villages to discover the typical Italian characteristics; but when Leighton, as a child, was taken from the gloom of Bloomsbury to this, to him a magic world, — syndicates, building-companies, tramways, and modern things generally, had not as yet invaded either Rome or Florence. When grown up and master of his own actions, he wandered into unsophisticated haunts — villages and towns off the beaten tracks, where with abnormal facility he learned the distinctive *pâtois* of every district, listening with delight to local folk-songs, and watching the peasants and the aborigines of the soil. In early sketch-books we find records of visits to Albano, Tivoli, Cervaro, Subiaco, San Giuminiano, and to even smaller and less known villages in Tuscany and Veneziano, where he enjoyed the unalloyed flavour of Italy and her people. Those who pay only flying visits to the country after they are grown up would find a difficulty perhaps in realising what Italy was to Leighton; but any one visiting for a few weeks even such a well-known place as Albano, without other preoccupation than to watch the natives and wander in the beautiful scenery to the sound of the many flowing fountains, could still catch something of the true national spirit which fascinated him so greatly. The typical Britisher might regard the ways of these natives of the *Provincia di Roma* as irrational, idle, semi-savage. Doubtless the streets and piazzas abound in noisy inhabitants, gesticulating with wild dramatic fervour, who appear to have otherwise little to do in life but to loiter and "look on"; sociable groups of women sit round the doorways knitting; but it is the talk, accompanied by excited action, which is engrossing them. Charmingly pretty children are playing everywhere—idle, troublesome, but so happy! To the

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accompanying sound of running waters,—night and day,—cries, yells, and songs ring out through the ancient little town.[1] High up on the side of the mountains it overlooks the Roman Campagna, the tragic strangeness of those land-waves rolling away, flattened and stretched out, for miles and miles, under the dome of light and shadowing cloud, a network of bright gleams and violet lakelets, to the far-off brilliant shine on the sea limit.[2] This noise, dramatic action, gesticulation, all ending apparently in nothing in particular, but filling the little town with such amazing vitality—what is it all about? The typical Englishman does not know—does not care to know, despising the whole thing as beneath his notice. But Leighton knew well what it meant. From experiences in his own nature he realised that it was but an innocent outlet, through voice and gesture, of an excitement resulting from an imperative dramatic instinct, a vital force in the emotional nature of the Italian. He recognised the necessity for such an outlet in such temperaments through his sympathy with the glad exuberance of physical vitality enjoyed in this sunlit land; anti-puritan though it may be, this exuberance is none the less pure and innocent.

The holy Saint Francis in his ecstasies of spiritual illumination would, it is said, break out into song from the natural impulse to find an outlet and to throw off the excess of excitement, that thrilled through his being.[3]

[1] Leighton wrote in a letter to his sister from Algiers of the strange sounds which the Moors emit, adding: "Much the same sort of thing is noticeable in the peasants near Rome, whose songs consist (within a definite shape) of long-sustained chest notes that are peculiar in the extreme, and though often harsh, seem to be wonderfully in harmony with the long unbroken lines of the Campagna."

[2] On December 1, 1856, Leighton writes to Steinle: "My Italian journey afforded me in every way the greatest pleasure and edification, and I seem now for the first time to have grasped the greatness of the Campagna and the giant loftiness of Michael Angelo."

[3] "Après de pareilles émotions, il avait besoin d'être seul, de savourer sa joie, de chanter sa liberté définitivement conquise, sur tous les sentiers le long desquels il avait tant gémi, tant lutté.

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Leighton knew that to suppress the vitality which needs such an outlet was to minimise the forces necessary for life's best work. He himself, in the working of his mind, was possessed of a magnificent facility—a facility which left the strength of his emotions fresh and free, to enjoy the ecstasies of admiration and delight which the choice gifts of nature and art had given him; but there are many among modern men and women, taught by much reading, who overweight their physical vitality in the effort to develop intellect and to forward self-interest, till all simple physical enjoyment is lost, and the natural man becomes repressed into a mental machine incapable of any spontaneous emotions of joy, and blunt to the fine aroma of life's keen and pure pleasures—

"My nature is subdued to what it works in."

To Leighton the simple joyous child of nature, in the form of the unsophisticated Italian, was a preferable being. To the end of his life he retained much of the child in his own nature, and had ever an inborn sympathy with the love for children so evident everywhere in unspoilt Italy; for the gracious caressing of them by the poorest of the poor—old men in the veriest tatters and rags showing a complete and beautiful submission to the dominating charms of babyhood.

The memory of the hideous, gruesome stories of baby-farming in England strikes indeed a contrast with the scenes

"Il ne voulut donc pas retourner immédiatement à Sain-Damien. Sortant de la cité par la porte la plus voisine, il s'enfonça dans les sentiers déserts qui grimpent sur les flancs du Mont Subasio. On était aux tout premiers jours du printemps. Il y avait encore çà et là de grandes fondrières de neige, mais sous les ardeurs du soleil de mars l'hiver semblait s'avouer vaincu. Au sein de cette harmonie, mystérieuse et troublante, le cœur de François vibrait délicieusement, tout son être se calmait et s'exaltait; l'âme des choses le caressait doucement et lui versait l'apaisement. Un bonheur inconnu l'envalussait; pour célébrer sa victoire et sa liberté, il remplet bientôt toute la forêt du bruit de ses chants.

"Les émotions trop douces ou trop profondes pour pouvoir être exprimées dans la langue ordinaire, l'homme les chante."—*Vie de S. François d'Assise, par Paul Sabatier.*

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that abound at every turn in any old, dirty, picturesque Italian village, and assuredly settles the question, Is our English development of civilisation an unalloyed benefit?

As a contrast to the definite, explicit German development of his intellectual machinery, Leighton had special sympathy with the emotional spontaneity of the Italian race; also as a contrast to the selective and finely poised conclusions to be worked out in theories of composition learnt from his beloved master Steinle, arose a special admiration for the casual, unpremeditated, inevitable grace and charm in the manners and gestures of this southern people. What laboured theories so often failed to achieve, nature here was always doing in her most careless moods.

In considering the intimate aspect of Leighton's nature, and the interweaving of the original fabric with the forces developed by the circumstances he encountered, the influence of Italy must assuredly be given a very distinct prominence. From her and her people he acquired courage in the exercise of his intuitive preferences, also a development of that rapid and direct insight so inborn in her children. Like the lizards that dart with such lightning speed across her sun-scorched walls and over the gnarled bark of the weird olive tree, the perceptions of the typical Italian are swift, and fly straight to the mark. In the Italian, however, this vividness of perception is mostly expended in ejaculation and dramatic gesture, which,—subsiding,—leaves a state of indolence and nonchalance, untroubled by any mental exertion. In Leighton the rapidity with which his perceptions seized the core of truth was backed by an intellectual activity of extraordinary power, by which he worked his intuitive sensibilities into the interests which guided the solid aims of his life.

Probably no Englishman ever approached the Greek of the Periclean period so nearly as did Leighton, for the reason that he possessed that combination of intellectual and emotional

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power in a like rare degree. The human beings who achieve most as active workers in the world, are doubtless those in whom can be traced a capacity for making apparently incompatible forces pull together towards a desired end. Leighton succeeded in allying two distinct developments in his nature; and by, so to say, putting these into double harness and driving them together, acquired an advantage which few other artists, if any, have possessed since the time of the Greeks.

But, being essentially English as well as Greek-like, Leighton pushed this combination of powers to a moral issue. He held as his creed of creeds that the mission of Art was to act as a lever in the uplifting of the human race, not by going beyond her own domain, but by directing the sense of beauty with which her true priesthood must ever be endowed, in order to eliminate from man his more brutal tendencies, to refine and perfect his insight into nature, and to develop his delight in her perfection. He held that, the stronger the emotional force in an artist, the stronger the sense of responsibility should be; the more he should seek to express it in a manner which would elevate rather than deprave. In his picture of "Cymon and Iphigenia," Leighton expressed the main dogma of his belief. In sentences towards the end of his second address to the Royal Academy students in the year 1881, he eloquently describes the complex and deep nature of those æsthetic emotions whence spring the Arts:—

"It is not, it cannot be, the foremost duty of Art to seek to embody that which it cannot adequately present, and to enter into a competition in which it is doomed to inevitable defeat.

"On the other hand, there is a field in which she has no rival. We have within us the faculty for a range of emotions of vast compass, of exquisite subtlety, and of irresistible force, to which Art and Art alone amongst human forms of expression has a key; these then, and no others, are the chords which it is her appointed duty to strike; and Form, Colour,

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and the contrasts of Light and Shade are the agents through which it is given to her to set them in motion. Her duty is, therefore, to awaken those sensations directly emotional and indirectly intellectual, which can be communicated only through the sense of sight, to the delight of which she has primarily to minister. And the dignity of these sensations lies in this, that they are inseparably connected by association of ideas, with a range of perceptions and feelings of infinite variety and scope. They come fraught with dim complex memories of all the ever-shifting spectacle of inanimate creation, and of the more deeply stirring phenomena of life; of the storm and the lull, the splendour and the darkness of the outer world; of the storm and the lull, the splendour and the darkness of the changeful and transitory lives of men. Nay, so closely overlaid is the simple æsthetic sensation with elements of ethic or intellectual emotion by these constant and manifold accretions of associated ideas, that it is difficult to conceive of it independently of this precious overgrowth. . . . "The most sensitively religious mind may indeed rest satisfied in the consciousness that it is not on the wings of abstract thought alone that we rise to the highest moods of contemplation, or to the most chastened moral temper; and assuredly Arts which have for their chief task to reveal the inmost springs of Beauty in the created world, to display all the pomp of the teeming earth, and all the pageant of those heavens of which we are told that they declare the Glory of God, are not the least eloquent witnesses to the might and to the majesty of the mysterious and eternal Fountain of all good things."

Not only could no attempt be approximately made at giving a real and vivid picture of Leighton's remarkable personality were not the three aspects of his nature taken into account, but also if the influences which affected him strongly during those years when his genius and character were being

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PORTRAIT OF PROFESSOR EDOUARD STEINLE

Drawn by Himself

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developed were not also considered. His conscious nature and feelings, during the first thirty years of his life, can be best traced in his letters, notably in those to his mother. It is easy to recognise, in reading his mother's letters to him, from whom he inherits the warm tender generosity which made his nature so lovable.

When at Frankfort, in 1845, he first became acquainted with the most "indelible" influence of his life in that inner sanctuary in which he had hitherto been a lonely inmate. Seven years later, in the Diary he calls "Pebbles," written for his mother, when, fully fledged, he leaves the nest to battle alone on the field of life, he pays a tribute of unqualified affection and gratitude to his master, Steinle, who first unlocked the door to Leighton's full consciousness of the depth of his devotion for his calling (see pp. 61 and 62).

In 1879, the year after Leighton was elected President of the Royal Academy, in the same letter to Mrs. Mark Pattison already quoted from, he writes, respecting the influences which affected his art development: "For *bad* by Florentine Academy, for good, far beyond all others, by Steinle, a noble-minded, single-hearted artist, *s'il en fut.* Technically, I learnt (later) much from Robert Fleury, but being very receptive and prone to admire, I have learnt, and still do, from innumerable artists, big and small. Steinle's is, however, the *indelible seal.* The *thoroughness* of all the great old masters is so pervading a quality that I look upon them all as forming one aristocracy."

During the first year when he settled in Rome, in the beginning of 1853, he made the acquaintance of Mr. and Mrs. Sartoris. Leighton's friendship with Mrs. Sartoris (Adelaide Kemble), many years his senior, and one who had ever viewed her art as a singer from the purest and highest aspect, became a strong and elevating influence in his life. Professor

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Giovanni Costa (the "Nino" of the letters), one of Leighton's most intimate friends from the year 1853 to the end in 1896, wrote of Mrs. Sartoris, referring to the early days in Rome from 1853 to 1856:[1] "The greatest influence on the life of Frederic Leighton was exerted by Mr. and Mrs. Sartoris (Miss Adelaide Kemble), who had the mind of a great artist. Mr. Sartoris was one of the greatest critics of art, and Mrs. Sartoris had a most elevated and serene nature."

This great friendship with Mr. and Mrs. Sartoris brought with it many others, notably those of Robert Browning and of Mr. Henry Greville. Some years later, Leighton writes of Mr. Henry Greville, in a letter to his pupil and friend, Mr. John Walker: "He is indeed one of the kindest and best men possible, I look on him myself as a second father"; and Henry Greville in a letter to Leighton writes: "I wish you were my son, Fay"—Fay being the name given to Leighton by his inner circle of intimates, and certainly a stroke of genius in the one who invented it. Writing from Frankfort to his mother, where he returned to show his works to Steinle after his family had finally migrated to Bath and he to Rome, he says: "I have had such a letter from Henry (Henry Greville); there never was anything like the tenderness of it. You would have been just enchanted."

The friendship with Mrs. Sartoris only ended with her death in 1879, the year after Leighton was elected President of the Royal Academy. Being then close upon fifty, deeply sensible of the grave responsibilities involved by his new position, Leighton entered on a fresh phase in his career. As president of the centre of national living art, this phase involved a serious view being taken of the interests of art such as could be encouraged by a public body. Also as one who had been helped and encouraged by personal friendship and influence to work out the best in him, with his ever eager

[1] "Notes on Lord Leighton," *Cornhill Magazine*, March 1897.

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FROM DRAWING OF ADELAIDE SARTORIS

Paris, 1856

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Adelaide Sartoris
Paris. April 1856

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and generous nature he felt anxious to hand on the help he had received by devoting a like sympathy to the individual interests of other workers. His field of action had become enlarged, and he rose with consummate ability to the fulfilment of the duties this larger area entailed on him. Not only by his biennial addresses to the students of the Royal Academy, but by the speeches delivered spontaneously at the councils and elsewhere, when no preparation would have been possible, his fame as an orator was established. Many there are who have heard the impromptu speeches he made, who can vouch, as do Mr. Briton Rivière and Mr. Hamo Thornycroft, that these were just as fine in language and excellent in the concise form in which the words were made to convey the intended meaning, as those which Leighton had carefully prepared beforehand, and possessed, moreover, the charm of an unlaboured effort.

The seventeen years, during which Leighton was President of the Royal Academy, and prominent in every direction as the leader of the art of his country, were not without saddening influences. His duties necessitated contact with many varieties of human nature, some far from sympathetic to him. The contrast between his own disinterested reverence for beauty, moral and physical, with the indifference displayed by many of his brother artists towards his own high aims and aspirations, forced itself more and more on Leighton as the optimistic fervour and enthusiasm of youth waned with years and failing health. He had to face the depressing fact that selfish motives are the ruling factors with most men, even with those who ostensibly follow the calling of beauty. Much of the joyousness of his spirit was lessened accordingly, though his "sweet reasonableness," to quote Watts' truly suggestive words, never deserted him. This prevented any bitterness or resentment from finding permanent location in his nature. Another source of distress arose from the fact that his great

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position aroused the jealousy of the envious. However exceptional his tact, however truly heartfelt his consideration for others, no virtues could stand against the vice of being so pre-eminently successful in the eyes of the envious, whose vanity alone placed them in their own estimation on a level with the great.

Nothing perhaps excites so rampant a jealousy in unappreciative and envious natures, as does the unexplainable charm of a delightful personality. It aggravates the dull and envious beyond measure to see a being thus endowed galloping over the ground in all directions with ease, there being in their eyes no sufficient explanation for the pace. Such success is viewed by the envious as a kind of trick, some witchery of fascination, which deludes the world into bestowing unmerited advantages on the conjuror. Those, on the contrary, who can appreciate a transcendent and delightful personality, recognise it as the convincing grace of the power of uncommon gifts flashing their radiance into the intercourse of every-day life, modestly ignored as conscious possessions but inevitably sparkling out in any human intercourse, and from a social point of view making the greatest among us the servants of all.

Jealousy fights with hidden weapons. What man or woman ever acknowledged being jealous? The passion is disguised. Hence the hideous sins that follow in its wake: ingratitude, treachery, calumnies, are called into the service to blacken the offending object. Bacon says of envy: "It is also the vilest affection, and the most depraved; for which cause it is the proper attribute of the devil, who is called *the envious man, that soweth tares amongst the wheat by night*, as it always cometh to pass that envy worketh subtilly, and in the dark; and to the prejudice of good things, such as is the wheat."

Leighton suffered from the jealousy of the envious, though in most cases the open expression of it was smothered during

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his life by reason of his power and position. Besides being tender-hearted and easily hurt at any feeling of hostility shown against him, he cordially hated any phase of the ugly.

In the spring of 1895 Leighton said to a friend: "My one constant prayer is that I should not live beyond seventy." His great dread was to be a burden to any one—to cease to be useful at all. His wish was more than fulfilled. He passed onward five years before the allotted three score and ten.

Many there were who felt with Watts that life was indeed darkened; "a great light was extinguished," a beloved friend was no longer amongst them to help, encourage, and brighten the days. To a wide social circle, a personality, rare in its charm and endowments, differing from all others, had passed off the stage. It was as if, amid the sober brown and grey plumage of our quiet-coloured English birds, through the mists and fogs of our northern clime, there had sped across the page of our nineteenth century history the flight of some brilliant-hued flamingo, emitting flashes of light and colour on his way.

To the wide public a power and a control, noble and distinguished in its quality, had ceased to rule over the art interests of the country. Last, but not least, to his "brothers and sisters," as Leighton called all earnest students and artists, it was as if a strong support, a centre of impelling force, an inspiration towards the best and highest in art, had been suddenly swept away.

On the day of his funeral, a friend, whose husband had known him from the commencement to the end of the brilliant career, wrote the following notes:—[1]

"Lord Leighton's funeral to-day was as brilliant as his life, and we came home from the majestic ceremony at St. Paul's Cathedral feeling that his kind and gracious spirit would have rejoiced—for all he loved and honoured in life were there

[1] The *Morning Post* of February 4, 1896.

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mourning for the loss of their gifted and genial friend. As the procession moved slowly into the Cathedral the crimson and golden pall was Venetian in its brilliancy, and the long branch of palm spoke touchingly of pain over and the conquest won. Music, the sister Art he so devoutly worshipped, lifted up her voice in pathetic accents to the dome of the vast Cathedral, striving to re-echo the solemnity and grief around.

"Dear gracious Leighton, how vividly my husband recalled his earliest impressions of him, the handsome young artist at Rome. Visions arise in the mind of joyous days in his second home there, the cultured and hospitable house of Adelaide Sartoris, which formed the happy background of Leighton's life. He remembered the departure of his picture 'The Triumph of Cimabue,' sent with diffidence, and so, proportionate was the joy when news came of its success, and that the Queen had bought it. It was the month of May. Rome was at its loveliest, and Leighton's friends and brother artists gave him a festal dinner to celebrate his honours. On receiving the news, Leighton's first act was to fly to three less successful artists and buy a picture from each of them (George Mason, then still unknown, was one), and so Leighton reflected his own happiness at once on others. To-day as we viewed the distinguished (in the best sense of the term) mourners, it seemed an epitome of all his social and artistic life. He never forgot an old friend, and not one was absent to-day. The men around his coffin all looked heartily sad. It was only when those peaceful words came, 'We give Thee hearty thanks, for that it hath pleased Thee to deliver this our brother out of the miseries of this sinful world,' that we remembered the agony of his last three days on earth, and we could be glad for our dear friend that it was past. We could give hearty thanks, but it was for him and him alone, for we turn with heavy hearts to our homes, feeling

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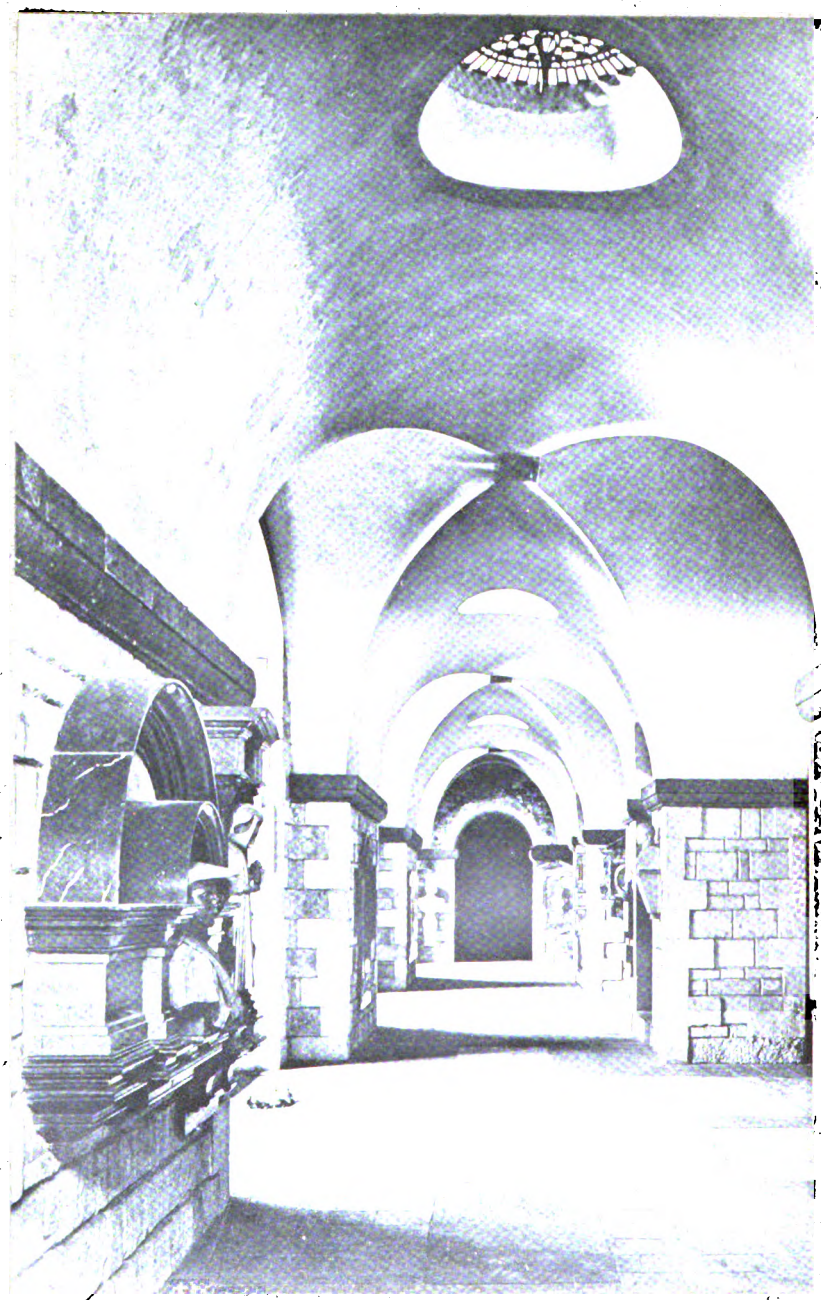

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CRYPT UNDER ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL, WHERE BARRY, SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS, TURNER, AND LORD LEIGHTON WERE BURIED

From a photo, by permission of Messrs. S. B. Bolas & Co.

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that with Frederic Leighton ever so much kindness, love, and colour has gone out of the world."

Attached to the wreath which lay on his coffin were the lines written by our Queen :—

> "Life's race well run,
> Life's work well done,
> Life's crown well won,
> Now comes rest."

. . . . . .

In Leighton's own letters, more than is possible in any other written words, will be traced those qualities of character and feeling which guided the rare gifts nature had bestowed. These, used with unstinting generosity for the benefit of others, established for our national art a position, cosmopolitan in its influence, never previously attained by English painting and sculpture, and of which it may be fairly hoped, future generations, no less than the present, may reap the benefit.

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CHAPTER I

ANTECEDENTS AND SCHOOL DAYS

1830–1852

SOME light is thrown on Leighton's ancestry by the following letter, written by Sir Baldwyn Leighton to Sir Albert Woods, Garter, at the time when a peerage was bestowed on Frederic Leighton. It deals with the question of associating the name of Stretton with the Barony.

"TABLEY HOUSE, KNUTSFORD,
January 10, 1896.

"DEAR SIR,—In answer to yours of January 9, I beg to say that there are two places called Stretton in the County of Salop; one, now known as Church Stretton, having become a small town, was formerly in the possession of my family through the marriage of John de Leighton, my lineal ancestor, with the daughter and heiress of William Cambray of Stretton in the fourteenth century, whose arms we still quarter (see Herald's Visitation for Shropshire). This no longer belongs to me, having been mortgaged and sold by Sir Thomas Leighton, Kt. Banneret, temp. Hen. VIII. But there is another Stretton in the parish of Alderbury with Cardeston which does still belong to me, and has always belonged to the family from time immemorial. I have been in communication with Sir Frederic Leighton on the subject, and it *is* my wish that he should adopt the supplemental title of Stretton. According to a pedigree made out by a Shropshire antiquarian some thirty years ago, Sir Frederic's branch descends from the younger son of the John de Leighton who married the Cambray heiress, and

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who was admitted burgess of Shrewsbury in 1465. There fore I am of opinion that it *is* a very proper supplemental title for Sir Frederic to assume.—I remain, yours, &c.,

"BALDWYN LEIGHTON.

"To Sir ALBERT WOODS, Garter."

In 1862, Leighton writes to his mother:—

"You must know that I received some time back a letter from the *Rev. Wm. Leighton* (address, *Luciefelde, Shrewsbury*) asking me very politely to give him whatever information I could about our family, as he was making a pedigree of the Leighton family, and was anxious to find out something about a branch that had settled and been lost sight of in London. I answered that I regretted I could give him no definite information on the subject, beyond our belief that we were of a younger branch of the Shropshire Leightons, whose arms and crest we bore, that I knew personally nothing of my family further back than my grandfather, telling him who and what he was. I ended by referring him *to Papa*, to whom I immediately wrote, telling him the nature of Mr. Leighton's request, and begging him to write to him at once in case he could give him any clue that might facilitate his researches. I then received a second, and very interesting, letter from Mr. L. telling me that he had found in Yorkshire some Leightons (I forget the Christian names, but not Robert) who claimed to descend from the Shropshire stock, and whose crest differed from the Leighton crest exactly as ours does, *i.e.* in the *forward* expansion of the right wing of the Wyvern; a peculiarity, by the by, which did not appear to be of weight with him. There was more in this letter which I don't clearly remember, but nothing establishing our claim; this letter I immediately forwarded to you, and since then both myself and Mr. Leighton have been waiting to hear from Papa."

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The conclusion arrived at from these inquiries was—that, three or four hundred years ago, the descendants of John de Leighton and the Cambray heiress migrated from Shropshire to Yorkshire, and that Leighton's grandfather, Sir James Leighton, court physician to the Emperor Nicholas of Russia, was a descendant of this branch. Dr. Leighton, the artist's father, married the daughter of George Augustus Nash of Edmonton. He and his wife, early in their married life, went to St. Petersburg, and it was supposed that he would probably succeed his father as court physician to the Czar, who favoured Sir James Leighton with his intimacy; but the climate of St. Petersburg not suiting Mrs. Leighton's health, they remained there but a few years. It was at St. Petersburg that the two eldest children were born, Fanny, who died young, and Alexandra, the god-child of the Empress Alexandra, who became Mrs. Sutherland Orr. From St. Petersburg, the family moved to Scarborough, and it was at Scarborough, on December 3, 1830, that the most famous member of the Leighton family was born. The question as to which was the actual house in which the event took place was satisfactorily settled at the time when Leighton was raised to the peerage, in letters which appeared in the press,—one containing the testimony of Mrs. Anne Thorley, who was in Dr. Leighton's service for three years with the family at Scarborough, and for two years after they moved to London. She affirms that Leighton was born in the house in Brunswick Terrace, now numbered 13, but which at that time consisted only of three houses. Mrs. Thorley adds, "Fred's mother was a splendid lady—such a good one with her children, and most affectionate."

A second son named James, who died in his infancy, was also born at Scarborough, and five years after the birth of Leighton his younger sister Augusta, now Mrs. Matthews, was born in London.

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Lord Leighton when a Boy
From a Portrait by Himself

Lord Leighton's younger Sister when a Child
From a Drawing by Lord Leighton

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Dr. Leighton had every prospect of excelling among those most distinguished in his profession. Deafness, however, by which he was unfortunately attacked about that time, made it impossible for him to practise any longer as a physician. Deprived of his active work, he turned his attention to more abstract lines of study, and to philosophy.

In 1840, Mrs. Leighton, after a severe illness, required a drier climate than that of England, and the family travelled on the Continent, visiting Germany, Switzerland, and Italy.

Family annals record the delight with which Leighton, the boy of ten, enjoyed the beauty of nature in Switzerland, the flowers and everything he saw in the land of mountains. When he reached Rome, the buildings, the fountains, the ruins, the models awaiting hire on the Piazza di Spagna, fascinated him, and he filled many sketch-books with records of all the picturesque scenes that struck him as so new and wonderful. From earliest days, drawing was Leighton's greatest amusement, and he had it always in his own mind that he would be an artist and nothing else. When in Rome, he was allowed to study drawing under Signor Meli, but his father insisted on other lessons being carried on with regularity and industry. We hear of his elder sister and Leighton learning Latin together from a young priest. Dr. Leighton had a commanding intelligence, and made his will felt. As with many fond fathers who centre their chief interest on an only son, and foster thoughts of a notable future for him, Dr. Leighton seems to have felt that the greater his interest and affection, the greater must be the exercise of strict discipline over his boy. Leighton received, to say the least, a stern upbringing from his father, mitigated, however, by the greatest tenderness from his mother. The boy's will respecting his future career proved sufficient for the occasion, and he had reason to be thankful that the general knowledge, which Dr. Leighton insisted on his acquiring, was instilled at so early an age. From the time he was ten years

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old he was made to study the classics, and at twelve he spoke French and Italian as fluently as English. Dr. Leighton had himself taught the boy anatomy, ever cherishing the hope that he would, when he came to years of discretion, renounce the idea of being an artist, and follow in the footsteps of his father and grandfather by becoming a doctor. In either case a knowledge of anatomy was thought necessary, and, in after years, Leighton declared he knew much more anatomy when he was fourteen than he did when he was President of the Royal Academy. "I owe," he said, "my knowledge to my father. He would teach me the names of the bones and the muscles. He would show them to me in action and in repose; then I would have to draw them from memory; until my memory drawing was perfect, he would not let it pass."

The family returned to England for the summer of 1841, spending it at the paternal grandfather's country house at Greenford; and during the following winter Leighton studied at the University College School in London. Mrs. Leighton's health again declined in England, and the family migrated to Germany, the country chosen by Dr. Leighton as that in which the education of the children could be best carried forward. Leighton studied under tutors at Berlin, it being only in his spare moments that he found time to sketch, or to visit the galleries. Then followed a move to Frankfort, and thence to Florence. There he was allowed to enter the studio of Bezzuoli and Servolini, celebrated artists in Florence, but of whose real greatness Leighton, even at that early age, entertained his doubts. It was in Florence that the father's will had finally to submit to the son's passion for his vocation. Dr. Leighton was too wise to allow prejudice to affect his serious actions. He could no longer blind himself to the fact, that this desire to be an artist was a vital matter with his son. He felt it would be wrong to try and override the boy's desires without

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seeking the opinion of an expert on art matters as to whether there was any probability of Leighton excelling. He therefore took him and his drawings to Hiram Powers, the sculptor, for the verdict to be given. The well-known conversation took place after Powers had examined the work.

"Shall I make him a painter?" asked Dr. Leighton.

"Sir, you cannot help yourself; nature has made him one already," answered the sculptor.

"What can he hope for, if I let him prepare for this career?"

"Let him aim at the highest," answered Powers; "he will be certain to get there."

Leighton had won: he had now to prove good his cause. Even though theoretically his father had given in, he yet hoped that, as years went on, a change in his boy's views might come about; but he was allowed to work at the Accademia delle belle Arti, under Bezzuoli and Servolini, and besides continuing his study of anatomy with his father, Leighton attended classes in the hospital under Zanetti. Of this time in Florence, one of his life-long friends, Professor Costa, writes: "I knew, both from himself and from his fellow-students, that at the age of fourteen Leighton studied at the Academy of Florence under Bezzuoli and Servolini, who at this time (1842) had a great reputation. They were celebrated Florentines, excellent good men, but they could give but little light to this star, which was to become one of the first magnitude. Leighton, from his innate kindness, loved and esteemed his old masters much, though not agreeing in the judgment of his fellow-students that they should be considered on the same level as the ancient Florentines. 'And who have you,' said Leighton one day to a certain Bettino (who is still living), 'who resembles your ancient masters?' And Bettino answered, 'We have still to-day our great Michael Angelos, and Raffaels, in Bezzuoli, in Servolini, in

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Ciseri.' But this boy of twelve years old could not believe this, and one fine day got into the diligence, and left the Academy of Florence to return to England. Although the diligence went at a great pace, his fellow-students followed it on foot, running behind it, crying, 'Come back, Inglesino! come back, Inglesino! come back,' so much was he loved and respected. He did come back, in fact, many times to Italy, which he considered as his second fatherland."

It was, however, at Frankfort, where the family settled in 1843, that Leighton fell under the real, living art influence of his life, in the person of Steinle. Leighton described this artist later as "an intensely fervent Catholic, a man of most striking personality, and of most courtly manners." In the temperament of this religious Catholic was united a fervour of feeling with a pure severity in the style of his art which belonged to the school of the Nazarenes, of which Steinle was a follower, Overbeck and Pfühler having led the way. A spiritual ardour and spontaneity placed Steinle on a higher level as an artist than that on which the rest of the brotherhood stood. Leighton, boy as he was, at once realised in his master the existence of that "sincerity of emotion,"—to use his own words when preaching, nearly forty years later, to the Royal Academy students; a quality ever considered by him as an essential attribute of the true artist-nature—of that inner vision of the religious poet, of that finer fibre of temperament which endowed art in Leighton's eyes with higher qualities than science or philosophy alone could ever include. Steinle viewed art with the reverence and nobility of feeling which accorded with those aspirations that had been hinted to the boy's nature in his best moments, but which had had no sufficiently clear, decisive outline to inspire hitherto his actual performances. In Steinle's work he found the positive expression of those aspirations; there, in such art, was an absolute confutation of

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the creed that art was but a pleasant recreation, having no backbone in it to influence the serious work of the world; the creed which meant that, if taken up as a profession, it led but to the making of money by amusing the æsthetic sense of the public in a superficial manner. The view taken by the magnates—the "Barbarians" of the time—was, that unless a painter were a Raphael, a Titian, or a Reynolds, his position was little removed from that of the second-rate actor or the dancer. It was not the profession, but the individual prominence in it which alone saved the situation. In Steinle, Leighton found an exponent of art, who reverenced the vocation of art itself as one which should be sanctified by the purest aims and the highest aspirations.

In the nature of one who exercises a strong influence over another is often found the real clue to the nature influenced. Circumstances had led Leighton to be reserved with regard to his deepest feelings respecting art, but with Steinle that reserve vanished. Under the influence of this master he realised an adequate cause for this deep-rooted, peremptory passion. Steinle's nature explains that of his pupil; for Leighton was, in an intimate sense, introduced to a full knowledge of his own self by Steinle. This influence, to use his own words, written more than thirty years later, was the "indelible seal," because it made Leighton one with himself. The impress was given which steadied the whole nature. There was no vagueness of aim, no swaying to and fro, after he had once made Steinle his master. The religious nature also of the German artist had thrown a certain spell over him. Leighton possessed ever the most beautiful of all qualities—the power of feeling enthusiasm, of loving unselfishly, and generously *adoring* what he admired most. Fortunate, it may possibly have been, that his father's strict training developed his splendid intellectual powers at an early age; fortunate it certainly was, that, when emancipated from other trammels, he

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entered the service of art under an influence so pure, so vital in spiritual passion as was that of Steinle.

However, it was not till Leighton reached the age of seventeen that he was allowed to give his time uninterruptedly to the study of art. At that age he had acquired sufficient knowledge of the classics and of the general lines of knowledge even to satisfy his father. He had also completely mastered the German, French, and Italian languages. The vitality of his brain was almost abnormal, otherwise his constitution was not strong. Constantly such phrases as "I am not ill, but I am never well" occur in his letters, and he suffered from weakness and heat, also from "blots" in his eyes, perhaps the result of scarlet fever, which he had as a child. His school days seem to have had their *mauvais moments.* When he was fifteen, his parents and elder sister went to England, leaving him and his little sister at school during their holidays. The love for his mother, and his longing to be with her, is told in the following pathetic appeal:—

"FRANKFORT A/M.,
Friday, June 26, 1845.

"[DEAR MAMMA],—Your letter, which I have just received, caused me the greatest pleasure, for I have been anxiously expecting it for three long days. I am very pleased to hear that Lina is getting stronger, though slowly, and hope that Hampstead will agree with her and you better than London. I am very sorry to hear that you are not very well. I hope that the country will refresh Papa after all his fatigues. I need not tell you that I was very unhappy when I heard what you said about my going to England; ever since I have been here, from the time I wake to the time I go to bed, I think of London; the other night, indeed, I went in my dream to see the new British Museum. However, if there is nothing to be done. . . . From Hampstead you can see London, and

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EARLY COMIC DRAWING. About 1850
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there is the dear old common where I and the Coodes used to play, and the pretty little lake where I went to slide, and it's such a pleasant walk to London and the galleries, and . . . is there *no* little hole left for poor Punch?[1] On the 16th July all the schoolboys go on a three weeks' journey, whose wing but yours can take care of me for so long a time? I will ask for money to buy a clothes-brush, I have none; 2 fl. I spent on water-colours for the painting lesson, 5 fl. a splendid book, 'Percy's Relics of Old English Poetry,' 1 fl. sundries, my last florin I lent to Bob, but he was fetched away in a hurry before his money was given to him, however he said he would send it me from Mayence, but I have not seen it since. It is a great bore to have no money; that 1 fl. would have lasted the second month very well as I only want it for sundries. I have dismissed Mottes, my *new* boots have already been *re*soled, and he made me wait three weeks for a pair of boots, which of course I did not take. I wish I had had turning clothes, my jacket is very shabby, and I cannot afford to put on my best whilst it goes to the tailor; my black trowsers are ruined, but I must wear them whilst my blue ones go to be lengthened. Little Gussy looks very well, she is very well, and has sundry 'zufrieden's' and 'très content's.' On the advice of *Pappe*, the master of mathematics and nat. phil., I have got a 'Meierhirsch's Algebraische Aufgaben.' I want a Euclid, mine is in England, how shall I get at it? I am quite well, but *long* to see you all, and to have some *wing;* pray write very soon. Give my best love to Papa and Lina, and believe me, dear Mamma, your affectionate and *speckfle* son, F. LEIGHTON."

History does not record whether the "little hole for poor Punch" had been found or not. Together with other studies,

[1] In the winter of 1845 Leighton went to a children's costume ball in Florence as Punch, and for some time after the name clung to him in his family.

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Leighton was allowed to attend the model class at the famous Staedelsches Institut, and, in 1848, when the family went to Brussels, he painted his first picture, Othello and Desdemona, his elder sister sitting as model for the Desdemona, and also a portrait of himself. From Brussels he went to Paris, studying in an *atelier* in the Rue Richer, among a set of Bohemian students, and then to Frankfort, to work seriously under his beloved master Steinle. The following letter to his father shows how unsatisfactory he considers his studies had been in both Brussels and Paris, and that now, as he expressed it, he is girding his "loins for a new race."

"CRONBERG, *Friday evening.*

"[DEAR PAPA],—As I have reason to believe that you are not indifferent to the fate of the studies which met with Dielmann's censure, and at the same time opened my eyes to the fact that I have not yet (to use a German phrase) 'die Natur mit dem Löffel gefressen,'[1] I now write to tell you that I have retouched better parts of them, and *that* to Burger's satisfaction as well as to mine. Of course some are better than others. Independently of the intense irritation which bad sitting (as well you know) occasions to my nerves, they give me great trouble, and I take it; but this can hardly astonish me, when I consider that, in point of fact, during the whole time that has elapsed between my leaving the model class in the Staedelsches Institut up to my return to Frankfurt, I have *never* studied from nature; that I did not in Brussels, I need not remind you, and you must also remember that everything I painted in Paris, in the way of portraits, was done *before* nature, I grant, but with a certain *ideal* colour or tone, the consistency of which might be illustrated by putting Rubens, Reynolds, Titian, Tom Lawrence, Vandyke, Velasquez, Correggio, Carracci, Rembrandt, and Rafael into a

[1] Literally, "devoured nature with a spoon."

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kaleidoscope, and setting them in a rotatory motion, in a word—

When taken
Well shaken.
(What's his name—Hem !)

I am therefore girding my loins for a new race, far from discouraged, but rather with the persuasion that one with my innate love for colouring, and, I think I may add, sharp perception of the merits and demerits of the colouring of others, has a fair chance of success; nor am I dissatisfied with my beginning."

In the year 1849, he went to London to paint the portrait of his great-uncle, Mr. I'Anson, Lady Leighton's brother, and wrote to his father and mother the following :—

"Fleeced at Malines—very fine passage—slept well, why the deuce had not I a carpet bag? horrid inconvenience! my chest of drawers twenty feet below the surface of the deck, obliged to get on friendly terms with a sailor to borrow a comb (which had got blue with usage)—lovely brown tints about my shirt, cuffs more picturesque than tidy; two hours stifling in that confounded hole of a waiting-room in the custom house; arrive at last at Mr. I'Anson's at about three o'clock; as he was not at home I dressed and ran half round London before dinner; crossed Kensington Gardens, saw the outside of the Exhibition, went down Hyde Park, along Green Park, stared at Buckingham Palace, rushed down St. James' Park, flew up Waterloo Place, made a dive at Trafalgar Square, and a lunge at Pall Mall, gasped all along Regent Street, turned up Oxford Street, bent round to the Edgware Road, and from there the whole length of Oxford Terrace, I brought home a very fine appetite!"

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"[My dearest Mother],—I have resumed my Uncle's likeness, and as far as it goes (the head is done) very successfully. Will you tell Papa from me that it is more 'aufgefasst' (as I expected) than 'durchgeführt,' but that I have seized the *twinkle* of his mouth to a T.

"Mr. I'Anson treats me with the utmost kindness, it is of course superfluous to tell you that I enjoy myself beyond measure.

"I am a very slow writer—I am without readiness either of thought or speech owing to the picturesque confusion which possesses my brain, and not, God knows, from a phlegmatic habit of mind."

Letter to his mother from Norfolk Terrace, Hyde Park:—

"[Dearest Mother],—I have received your kind letter, and conclude from your silence on that point that Lina is now getting on well. In order to avoid losing time on fluency of style, I shall follow, strictly as I find them, the heads of your epistle, and answer them in the same succession. First, I hasten to thank you and Papa for your kind permission to prolong my stay, a permission which I value the more that I know that Papa was desirous I should return as soon as possible. You tell me, dear Mamma, that I am not to lose time in seeing the *lions* of London, and Papa, in his displeasure at my having done so little as yet towards the real object of my visit, seems to imply an idea that I *have* been so doing; I regret very much that you should entertain that notion, and assure you that I have neither hitherto dreamt, nor have ultimate intention, of seeing that long list of wonders, the Colosseum, the polytechnic, the cosmorama, the diorama, the panorama, the polyorama, the overland mail, Catlin's exhibition, the Chinese exhibition, nor even Wild's great globe, for that, I am told, costs five shillings; this is a decided case of 'Frappe,

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mais écoute.' And if Papa did not think that I had so wasted my time, is it not very certain that, if I had not thought it a matter of duty, I would not have tired myself making what I most hate, calls, instead of seeing works of art?

"Lady Leighton looked in some respects worse, and in some much better, than I expected; I was surprised to see her walk with her back bent, and leaning on a stick; but I was more surprised still to see a face so free, comparatively, from wrinkles, and bearing such evident traces of former beauty. Her reception was of the warmest; in her anxiety lest I should be lonely and uncomfortable in an inn, she insisted on my sleeping in her house. She talked much, long, and *well*, though slowly and in a suppressed tone; she dwelt tenderly on Papa's name, and advocated warmly our return to England. I saw two letters which she wrote to her brother, my uncle, and which were both most elegantly written; both contained a paragraph in allusion to me; in the first, written before my visit (in answer to one in which my uncle had prepared her for seeing me), she expresses herself most *eager to receive and to love the grandson, of whom all speak so highly;* in the second, written after my return to London, she says that her *dear and fascinating grandson amply realises all her expectations*, and that seeing him has increased that pain which she feels at being separated from us all.

"Now, I will give you a *catalogue raisonné* of whom I have seen: Cowpers, this you know; Smyths, ditto; Laings, very kind, though Mr. Laing, like the Cowpers, did not know me till I mentioned my name; Wests, exceedingly kind, invitation to dinner: Richardsons, motherly reception, party, given for me; Moffatt, very *prévenant*, asked me twice to dinner, both of which invitations I was unfortunately obliged to refuse, but wrote a very civil note, and went next morning in person to apologise; Hall, dreadfully busy, but gave me cards to Maclise, Goodall, Frith, Ward, Frost; Maclise was not at home, but

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I found Goodall, Ward, and Frith, and was pleased with my visits. There is a new school in England, and a very promising one; correctly drawn historical *genre* seems to me the best definition of it. They tell me there is a fine opening for an historical painter of merit, and that talent never fails to succeed in London. Goodall, a young man about thirty, who painted 'The Village Festival,' in the Vernon Gallery, and of which you have an engraving in one of your Art Journal numbers, sells his pictures direct from the easel; and he does not stand alone. Sir Ch. Eastlake received me very politely, but looks a great invalid; Lance, very jolly, and Fripp, ditto. Bovills and E. I'Ansons, very kind, invitations, of course; Mackens, you know; I have found no time to call on Dr. Holland, Mr. Shedden, or Tusons.

"Having told you *whom*, I will now tell you rapidly *what*, I have seen: Vernon Gallery, very much gratified; Dulwich Gallery, very much disappointed; British Institution, ditto; National Gallery, pictures magnificent, locality disgraceful, I must make another visit there; Royal Academy, on the whole, satisfactory; British Museum, very fine; Mogford's Collection, very indifferent; Marquis of Westminster (Mr. Laing), very fine indeed; private collection (through interest of Mr. Moffatt), delightful; Windsor, *Vandyke*, superb; *Lawrence*, a wretched quack. Time presses—*la suite au prochain numéro.*"

The portrait of his great-uncle, Mr. I'Anson, here reproduced, proves that the visit to London effected the desired result. On his return to Frankfort he painted the portraits of Lady Cowley and her three children. Lady Cowley writes: "I am delighted with the pictures of my dear little girls, and again return you my most sincere thanks for having painted them." And in another letter: "I should have called on Mrs. Leighton all these days, had I not been very unwell with the grippe, as I wished to express to her, as well as to yourself, how very grateful I am for the beautiful portrait you have

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MR. I'ANSON, LORD LEIGHTON'S GREAT-UNCLE. 1850

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made of my little Frederick. I am quite delighted with it, as well as every one else who has seen it. Besides being extremely like, it is such a good painting that it must always be appreciated. Ever yours sincerely, Olive Cecilia Cowley." In the spring of 1852, Leighton, being then twenty-one, went to Bergheim, to paint the portraits of Count Bentinck's family. He writes from there :—

"[DEAREST MAMMA],—Having naturally a reflecting turn of mind, I am struck with the truth of the following aphorism: 'It's all very well to say I'll be blowed, but where's the wind?' Circumstances induce me to deliver a sentiment of a parallel tendency; it's all very well to say 'mind you write'; but where's the post? A deficiency in that latter commodity is a leading feature in the economy of the principality of Waldeck; so much so, that any individual residing in Bergheim, and desiring to carry on a correspondence 'ins Ausland,' is obliged to take advantage of the privilege freely granted him by the liberal constitution of the country of carrying his own letters to the first frontier town of the next state, and having posted them, waiting for an answer. I, however, *knowing my privileges*, and not being desirous of availing myself of them in *that line*, humbly and modestly send these lines by my hostess's flunkey, who is going to Fritzlar to-morrow on an errand of a similar description. *N.B.*—If you want a person to receive an epistle within a fortnight (that is allowing you to be a neighbour), you must chalk up *per express* on the back of it, in consideration of which he or she will receive it through the medium of a hot messenger, much, and naturally, fatigued and excited by a journey performed at the rate of half a mile an hour, not including the pauses in which the *inner man* is refreshed and invigorated by a cordial gulp of 'branny un worrer.'

"Fancy a man getting to a place, by appointment,

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expecting a carriage and trimmings to take him to a lovely retirement in the country, and finding—devil a bit of it! Well that's precisely what did not happen to me when I got to Waldeck, because although the carriage was not there, there was a letter to say it could not come. The road to Bergheim, which crosses a river of no mean pretensions without the assistance of a bridge (other advantageous peculiarity of the state of Waldeck), was, it appeared, rendered impracticable by an inundation of the torrent alluded to; it was therefore proposed to me (without an option) to perform the journey on the top of an *oss* provided for the purpose and accompanied by a groom mounted on another; I willingly accept an offer so much to my taste, and for the first time after a lapse of nearly three years put a leg on each side of a steed. The first part of the road was executed at a round trot on a very nice level *chaussée*, but I cannot say that I felt altogether at home on my saddle. An eye to effect is nevertheless kept open, which is manifested by my catching up two drowsy, drawling, jingling 'po shays' and sweeping past them with supreme contempt, but at a great expense of my lumbar muscles. Presently, however, my continuation-clad members began to thaw a little, and to adapt themselves to the saddle, which also lost some of its rigid severity; I began to feel very comfortable, and, by Jove! it was a good job I did, for on getting out of Fritzlar, we left the high road (for reasons above given) and plunged into a rugged, donkey-shay sort of by-path in which the ruts were without exaggeration a foot deep. Nothing daunted, however, I make light of this 'terrain légèrement accidenté,' cross stream and ride along tattered banks with the nonchalance of the Chinese Mandarin in the Exhibition of '51; in fact, such is my confidence in myself, that I at last begin to feel above my stirrups, I scorn them, fling them over my saddle, and perform without their assistance the rest of the journey to within

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half a mile of Bergheim, and that on a road the profile of which was about this:

(Here was drawn a line representing a hill-side almost perpendicular.)

"On my arrival I am of course kindly received by the Countess (her husband is still at Oldenburg), got my tea, and go to bed rather stiff after an equestrian performance of about two hours and a half. The house is large and rambling, fifteen windows in a row, and yet I cannot get a satisfactory light, the only available north room looking on a lane, the white-washed houses of which reflect disagreeably on the picture, whenever the sun shines. However I must make up my mind to it and do my best; I am at present painting the Countess."

"BERGHEIM, *Sunday.*

"[DEAR MAMMA],—In the midst of my anxious expectations of a letter from you, it suddenly occurred to me that I had forgotten to give you my direction; in the full confidence that *late is far preferable to never*, I now hasten to make up for my omission—

Mons. F. Leighton
bei
Ihrer Erlauchten der Gräfin von
Waldeck und Pyrmont
zu Bergheim
bei Fritzlar
Fürstenthum Waldeck.

"*N.B.*—You will not forget to write *per express* on the top of the envelope; for reasons, see my letter of last Sunday.

"Being sorely pressed for time, I now huddle on to the rest of the paper a few loose remarks, for the incoherency of which I crave your indulgence.

"The aspect of affairs is much changed since my last epistle; then, I was looking forward with anxious though sanguine

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expectation to the labour before me; now, I look back on one portrait (that of the Countess), achieved to the great satisfaction of those for whom it is intended, and contemplate with satisfaction the progress which the other is making in the same direction. I must, however, add that, owing to the necessary absence of the Countess for two days next week, my return home will be delayed in proportion, as I have a few more touches to give to the portrait of my eldest patient, whose husband is desirous of taking it over to England with him. (I shall probably be with you Saturday afternoon—at all events I shall let you know beforehand.)

"What I said a few lines back will have suggested to you what I am now going to add; Colonel B. is now returned from Oldenburg, and will probably be in London in the early part or middle of June; he is *much* pleased with the pictures, and in his kindness has promised me an introduction to his brother in town, and also to another relation, whose name I have forgotten; the result of which is to be: access to the collections of Lord Ellesmere, Duke of Sutherland, and Sir Robert Peel. I told Colonel B. that if on his road to or from Toeplitz in the autumn he should pass through Frankfurt, I should be very glad if he could bring the pictures with him, as they would both want a varnish, and the children probably a few glazes and touches; he said that he would make a point of so doing, that indeed after all the trouble and pains I had taken for him, it was the least he *could* do; for these and other reasons (not unimportant) which I shall communicate when I see you, you need not regret my having made two journeys to paint his wife and children.

"That I spend one of the days of the Countess' absence in seeing *Wilhelmshöhe*, a sight reputed unique of its kind, will, I hope, not seem unreasonable.

"I have noted down, as they occurred to me, during the

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last few days one or two little arrangements, relative to my approaching journey, which I would ask you to make during my absence, trusting at the same time that if in the meanwhile anything else should occur to your provident mind, and be transmitted to your *many-knotted* pocket-handkerchief, you will kindly carry it into execution, in order to avoid delay when I return from the country, as *my* time will be almost entirely taken up by Lady P.'s [Pollington's] sitting and the *business calls* I have to make.

"Will Papa kindly order a tin case for my compositions; it should be a plain cylinder, about an inch and a half in diameter, with a lid at one end; let its length be that of my 'Four Seasons.'

"To my amazement I have just received a letter from you, dear Mamma—*did* I give you my direction? You forgot the *per express* on the back of the letter. Pray write soon. Much love and many kisses to all.—Your dutiful and affectionate son, F. LEIGHTON."

Soon after Leighton's return to Frankfort Lord Cowley was appointed British Ambassador in Paris, and writes the following letters. The invitation he gives to Leighton to make his home at the Embassy while pursuing his studies was not accepted, Steinle's teaching being only given up later for the charms of Italy.

"MY DEAR MR. LEIGHTON,—I am more obliged than I can say by the kindness you have shown in painting portraits of my children. I never saw anything so like, or in general so pleasing, as the portrait of Frederic, and I only regret that it is not in England to be seen and appreciated. Once more accept my thanks, and believe me to be very truly yours, COWLEY."

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"*Sunday Afternoon.*

"My dear Mr. Leighton,—It has been quite out of my power to get to your house, as I had intended, to take leave of you, and to thank you again for the valuable reminiscence which through your talent and kindness I carry away with me. It will give Lady Cowley and myself great pleasure if you will visit us at Paris. You cannot find a better school of study than the Louvre, and we shall be most happy to lodge and take care of you.

"Pray present my best compliments to the members of your family.

"I regret very much not being able to do it in person.—Very faithfully, Cowley."

On his return from Waldeck, Leighton painted the portrait of Lady Pollington, one of his Frankfort acquaintances.

During these years, when Leighton studied under Steinle, his family lived also at Frankfort, and therefore few other letters written at that time exist. There was a journey to Holland, made during the early summer of 1852, from England, where he and his family had returned for a visit. The journey back to Frankfort, *viâ* Holland, is the subject of a long letter to his mother.

"There I am at the Hague. Pretty place, the Hague, clean, quaint, cheerful, *and* ain't the Dutch just fond of smoking out of long clay pipes! *And* the pictures, *Oh* the pictures, *Ah* the pictures! That magnificent Rembrandt! glowing, flooded with light, clear as amber, and do you twig the *grey* canvas? *What* Vandykes! what dignity, calm, gently breathing, and a searching thoughtfulness in the gaze, amounting almost to fascination; and only look at that Velasquez, sparkling, clear, dashing; Paul Potter, too, only

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"THE DEATH OF BRUNELLESCHI." 1851

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twenty-two years old when he painted that bull, and just look at it; Jan Steen, Terburg, Teniers, *Giov. Bellini* (splendid), &c. &c. There I catch myself bearing something in mind: 'And yet, after all' (with an argumentative hitch of the cravat), 'all that those fellows had in advance of us was a palette and brushes, and *that* we've got too!' I walk down to Scheveningen, and sentimentalise on the seashore; I find the briny deep in a very good humour, and offer *you* mental congratulations.

"About the Rembrandt at Amsterdam; I say nothing, for it is a picture not to be described. I can only say that, in it, the great master surpasses himself; with the exception, however, of this and the Vanderhelst opposite to it, which is full of spirit and individuality, the *Ryko Museum* is tolerably flat. After a dull afternoon, I hurry off to Arnheim, and to Mayence, and to Frankfurt, where I arrive on Wednesday evening. From Cologne to Frankfurt, Janauschek[1] was on the same conveyance as myself; I made her acquaintance, which was a great blessing to me on that tedious, cockney-hackneyed journey. She is lady-like, interesting, amiable, and *severely* proper, almost cold; she observed the strictest incognito. Towards evening, however, when she had ascertained that I was a resident at Frankfurt, and therefore probably knew her perfectly well, and that I was an artist, which excited her sympathy, and that my name was Leighton, a name with which she was acquainted (through Schroedter and others) as that of one of the most talented young artists of Frankfurt (hem!), she relaxed considerably. She has a melancholy and most interesting look, and talks very despondently of the state of dramatic art nowadays. I made myself useful to her at the station, and she was warmly grateful. About my picture[2] (which I have entrusted to Steinle's care)

[1] A distinguished actress.
[2] Probably "The Death of Brunelleschi."

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I have nothing to communicate, except that I am confirmed in thinking that it has been universally well received; even Becker seems to like it in many respects—of course you know that the leading fault is that it was painted under his rival; Oppenheim said (when I talked of it as a daub) that he wished he could daub so, and that he promised me a great future; Prince Gortschakoff (who, by the by, preferred the portraits, and judges with all the *aplomb* of a Count Briez) introduced himself to me in the gallery, and told me in the course of conversation that he regretted very much having no work of mine, adding that he only bought masters of the first order; *that* was a compliment, at all events; Dr. Schlemmer has been very kind to me, and has given me a letter for Venice; I dined with him on Sunday, and made the acquaintance of Felix Mendelssohn's widow, a charming woman."

Between the years 1849 and 1852 Leighton painted, besides the portraits mentioned, three finished pictures, "Cimabue finding Giotto in the Fields of Florence," "The Duel between Romeo and Tybalt," and "The Death of Brunelleschi"; and also made the notable drawing, now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, of a scene during the plague in Florence. His master, Steinle, easily discerned that Leighton was truly enamoured of Italy; the subjects he chose were Italian, and his memory was full of the charm and fascination of the country which he ever referred to, to the end of his life, as his second home. It was decided that he should go to Rome, his father having determined to leave Frankfort and to reside at Bath, where his mother, Lady Leighton, was then living. Steinle gave Leighton an introduction to his friend and fellow "Nazarene," Cornelius, and on the eve of his departure his mother wrote a farewell letter of "injunctions," flavoured happily by hints of humour. There is something very quaint to those who knew Leighton after he was thirty in the admonitions

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"THE PLAGUE IN FLORENCE." 1851

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with regard to manners and politeness, which occur in several of his mother's letters.

"My dearest Child,—As we are about to part, you may perhaps think you will be rid of my lectures, but no, I leave you some injunctions in writing, so that you will not be able to urge the plea of forgetfulness if you continue your negligent habits, though you certainly may *forget* to read what I write—but I trust to your love and respect for me, though the latter needs cultivation nearly as much as habits of refinement in you. I have no new advice to give you, I can but repeat what I have urged on you many times from your childhood upwards; I do implore you, let your conscience be your guide amidst all temptations, they will be such as they have never yet been to you, as you will henceforward have no other restraint on your actions than what is self-imposed. I beseech you, do not suffer your disbelief in the dogmas of the Protestant Church to weaken the belief I hope you entertain of the existence of a Supreme Being. Strive to obey the law He has implanted in us, which approves good and condemns evil, though the struggle for the mastery between these principles is sometimes fearful, as every one knows, especially in youth. My precious child, if one sinful mortal's prayer for another could avail, how carefully would you be preserved from moral evil (the greatest of all evil); but I need not tell you there is no royal road to Heaven any more than to excellence in inferior objects, every advantage must be obtained by energy and perseverance. May God help you to keep free of the greatest of all miseries, an upbraiding conscience; for though this can be deadened for a time in the hurry of life while youth lasts, there comes an hour when life loses its attractions, and *then* issues the troubled consequence of merry deeds. I am aware you have heard all this a hundred times, and better expressed, but it will bear repetition; and now that it is your

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mother who is counselling you, you will not, I trust, turn a deaf ear.

"I can but repeat what I have continually told you—to refine your feelings you must neither utter nor encourage a coarse thought. It would be an inexpressible pleasure to me to leave you confirmed in good habits; but wishes are idle. I trust to your desire to improve in all ways and to please me. The next sheet I wrote some time ago, intending to rewrite it, but the trouble is too great for my shaking hands, and I add what I have written to-day on separate pieces of paper. I have written enough; I have only now to add an entreaty that you will not throw these admonitions away, but sometimes read them, remembering they come warm from your mother's heart.

"My child, your manners are very faulty, and I am consequently much disappointed. You take so much after me, and my nearest relations had such refined manners, that I made sure you must resemble my father and brothers. There is, however, nothing on earth to prevent your becoming the gentleman I wish to see you, and remember to write ineffaceably on the tablets of your memory, 'Too much familiarity breeds contempt.' You remember how seriously young ——'s forwardness has been commented on. Well, it is true, you have never, as far as I know, spoken as he has done; but as I have seldom seen you in company, nor your father either, without observing some want of politeness, is it not probable that other people have their eyes open also?"

These admonitions received, Leighton started on his journey to Rome. At Innsbruck, on August 18, 1852, he began to write a Diary, in order that his mother should hear the details of his travels, and to serve "as a clue" by which he might one day recall the "impressions and emotions of the years of his artistic noviciate."

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Leighton's utterances on paper in these early days display the same intense exuberance of vitality which, during the whole of his notable career, served to spur on his mental and emotional powers to perform with great completeness all the various kinds of work which he undertook; a vitality which conquered triumphantly the effects of indifferent health and troubled eyesight. In the diaries and letters is also to be traced the existence of that Greek-like combination of qualities so characteristic of Leighton—namely, explicit precision in his thought and expression, and a subtle power of analysis, united with great emotional sensitiveness and enthusiastic warmth of temperament. His feeling for beauty was an intoxicating joy to him. Heartfelt and genuine joy engendered by beauty in nature and art is not a very common feeling among the moderns, though so much fuss is made by many in our day in their endeavours to become "*artistic*"; but, as a ruling guide, beauty has gone out of fashion. The accounts that Leighton gives of his ecstasies in the presence of beautiful scenes, enforce the belief entertained by those who knew him best, that it was the power which beauty exercised over him that developed his exceptional strength in all artistic directions. What force in the over-riding of difficulties does not passion give to the lover! No less a force was engendered in Leighton by the inspiration of the beauty of nature.

In the letter to his mother, which accompanies the Diary, referring to the joy he has been experiencing, Leighton adds: "I feel almost a kind of shame that so much should have been poured down on me. I will put my talent to usury, and be no slothful steward of what has been entrusted to me. Every man who has received a gift ought to feel and act as if he was a field in which a seed was planted, that others might gather the harvest." The purity of purpose which guided Leighton's life to the end, generated first by the precepts of his mother in the fertile soil of his own beautiful

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nature, subsequently developed by the teaching of the high-minded Steinle, and finally established later by other elevating influences, chastened the emotional side of Leighton's passion for beauty, and disentangled it even in the earliest days from lower and purely sensuous contamination. The puritanical attitude of mind towards beauty appeared to Leighton absolutely impure and desecrating, in that it associated influences and feelings which are of the lowest with the appreciation of God's most beautiful creations, and some of man's highest aspirations with sensations entirely degraded and unworthy.

Fun and humour abound in the family letters, and in the Diary. Leighton was never guilty of being sentimental, and when referring to the word *ideal* in one of his letters, he writes he "hates such stuff." After he died, it was written of him: "He was no idealist; needless to say, he was no materialist, no one less so; nor does the term realist seem to recall his nature. He was—if such a word can be used—an actualist, the actual was to him of primary importance. But the actual meant a great deal more to Leighton than it does to most of us. Life and its vivid interests was spread over a much wider area; so many more of its various ingredients were such very actual entities to him."[1]

And when Leighton started, at the age of twenty-one, to begin his independent life, we feel that it is with the *actual* that he grappled—the actual in his sensations, his feelings, his impressions, his conditions. An unmistakable note of reality rings through his description of all these. He has no tendency, even unconsciously, when under the glamour of the most entrancing impressions, to colour the picture other than he *actually* saw it. In the strength of his own real nature he goes forth on the journey of life.

[1] See Appendix, In Memoriam.

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DIARY

INNSBRUCK, *August* 18, 1852.

"When Hop o' my Thumb, a nursery hero of European note, first sallied out into the world with an eye to making a fortune, his first step was (justly foreseeing what the world would expect of the hero of a future romance) to lose himself in a large and horrid forest, in which it was pitch dark all day long, and nothing was heard but . . . &c. &c. (Here see biog. of H.O'M. Thumb, Esq., vol. i.)

I contemplate the life and adventures of Mr. Thumb,

"Now, in those days mile-posts were not yet come in, and maps were excessively expensive; how, then, was H.O'M.T., after he should have realised a large independence, to find his way back through this intricate waste? Here admire the man of parts and sagacity! '*He determined*,' says the historian, '*to drop pebbles in a row all along the path*'!

"Admirable Thumb! I, too, purpose, as I stroll along, to drop every now and then mental pebbles, which shall serve as a connecting link between the past and the future, and as a clue by which I may one day recall the emotions and impressions of the years of my artistic noviciate.

and adopt one of his measures,

"Be with me, oh Thumb!

"*N.B.*—Quality of pebbles not warranted.

but make a reservation.

PEBBLES

"Kind, affectionate, earnest Steinle!

Pebble I.

"In a record of whatever concerns me as an artist, *his* name should be at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end. *Now*, at the beginning, for our parting is still painfully present to my mind; our parting, and the last few days we spent together: the sad face and moistened eye with which he watched the diligence in which I rolled off from Bregenz; his

A tribute of affection and respect for my dear Steinle.

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fitful way, when we travelled together—one moment jovial and facetious, another laying his hand affectionately on my shoulder and remaining silent; his saying to me before I started, 'I shall be all alone to-morrow, here, and yet I shall be with you all the day.' . . .

"*In the middle*, all through, and to the end—because if ever, hereafter, my works wear the mark of a pure taste, if ever I succeed in raising some portion of the public to the level of high art, rather than obsequiously acquiesce in the judgments of the tasteless and the ignorant, and if I keep alive, to the end, the active conviction that an artist, who deserves the name, never ceases to learn, the key of such success will be in one name: Steinle; in having constantly borne in mind his precept, and his example.

I find on reflection that though I started a week ago, I am only just gone!

"Although a week has already elapsed since I left Frankfurt, so long my home, it is only now that I have parted from Steinle that I really feel that I have taken the great step, that I have opened the introductory chapter of the second volume of my life, a volume on the title-page of which is written "Artist." It seems to me that my wanderings began at *Bregenz*, and that in retracing, as I presently shall, my route until I got there, I am tearing open again leaves that were closed—to remain so. I seize the opportunity offered by this first day of repose to take breath, and, as I stand within the threshold, to look before me and reconnoitre. Italy rises before my mind. Sunny Italy! the land that I have so long yearned after with ardent longing, and that has dwelt in my memory since last I saw it as a never-fading, gentle-beckoning image of loveliness; I am about again to tread the soil of that beloved country, the day-dream of long years is to become a reality. I am enraptured!

I look forward,

but don't feel quite *it*.

"And yet—how is it that my pleasure is not unalloyed? that I involuntarily shrink from grasping the height of my wishes? It is because I feel a kind of sacred awe at breaking through

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the charm that has been so long gathering around the image that I have carried in my inward heart, as one who loves, at touching with cold *reality* that which has so long been the far removed object of dreamy, sweetly melancholy longings!

"I cannot help thinking that an imaginative man must feel something similar when on the point of changing courtship for marriage.

"Other thoughts, too, assail me, and sometimes make me uneasy. 'Do I fully feel . . .' No, 'Shall I *continue* fully to feel the immense importance to me of the three or four years now before me? feel that they will be the corner-stone of my career, for good or for evil? Shall I have the energy to carry out all my resolutions? Shall I fulfil what I have promised?' . . . Then I think of Steinle, and I feel reassured. Get better.

"Let me come to the point, to the description of my journey; but before I begin, let me remember that, whilst of all my friends and companions only *three* were present at my departure,—one of them was there in order to give me a commission, and another to acknowledge a service,—old General Bentinck did not think it too great an exertion to see off, at eight in the morning, one, three times younger than himself. Pebble II.

"My first day's journey took me to Middelburg, along the Bergstrasse, which we all know, and of which I therefore say nothing, and yet I enjoyed it more than I ever had done before; it was one of those cool, clear, *opalescent* mornings, in which all nature looks as if it was teeming with health and freshness; there was something exhilarating, too, in the atmosphere, which very much increased my enjoyment; I looked upon familiar scenes, but I saw them in a new light; it seemed to me as if I was reading nature in a new book. Middelburgh, August 11.

"On arriving at Heidelberg, I hurried at once, by appointment with Steinle, to a place in the neighbourhood called

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Stift Neuburg.

'Stift Neuburg,' the property and residence of Frau Rath Schlosser, the widow of his old and intimate friend, Rath Schlosser.

"Picture to yourself, just where the Neckar makes a graceful curve, about a mile above Heidelberg, half-way up a rich and sunny slope, chequered with clustering vineyards and luxuriant meadows, an old, picturesque convent, with its adjoining chapel and appurtenant dairies and farmhouses, the whole group raised up on a lofty, timeworn, weather-beaten terrace—and you will form some idea of *the Stift*. There I spent the afternoon in the most charming possible manner, whether in wandering with Steinle along the solitary, shady walks of the convent garden, or in snuffing about in the vaulted, mildew old library (which, by the by, contains six or seven thousand valuable and curious books), or the silent chapel, with its stained-glass windows, or in looking through Frau Rath's magnificent collection of drawings by German artists, or, finally, in enjoying the conversation of the Frau Rath herself, who is a most clever and amiable old lady. The next morning (for I spent the night there) after all breakfasting together, we went down by a postern gate to the river-side, and awaited the arrival of the Heilbronn steamer; general leave-taking, shaking of hands, gratitude and thanks on the one side, on the other reiterated invitations for the future, which I sincerely hope I may one day be able to meet. The valley of the Neckar as far as Heilbronn, where we arrived on the evening of the same day, is dull enough in all conscience; indeed, had it not been for the company and always interesting conversation of Steinle, I really do not know what I should have done with myself; such a contrast with the preceding day!

I enjoy myself.

Heilbronn, August 12.

"Between Heilbronn and the Lake of Constance, however, a new scene opens out; I see Germany under a totally new aspect, I understand at last what German poets mean when they rave about the lovely 'Schwabenland' and call it the

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'Perle deutscher Gauen'; I can now imagine the existence of *landed patriotism* (if I may be allowed the expression) among the Germans coming from that part of the country. It is, indeed, an enchanting panorama; a never-ceasing variety of rich, profusely fertile valleys, studded with cheerful, bright-looking, home-inviting villages, and enclosed by chains of gently undulating hills. The corn was ripe, and waved in golden stripes across the variegated plains; the peasants, a picturesque, good-humoured set, were scattered over the fields, some mowing down the heavy laden wheat, others binding it into graceful sheaves; in one respect the scene reminded me of my own dear country: it looked as if a blessing were on it.

Ulm: its cathedral.

"On our road we passed through Ulm,[1] and visited the cathedral, some parts of which (especially the portico) are very beautiful and elegant; the interior contains a magnificent and highly elaborate tabernacle, and some wood-carving by Syrlin of exquisite workmanship; the whole, however, left a melancholy impression on both of us, especially on Steinle, who is an ardent Catholic. It stands neglected and half-finished, in the midst of a miserable, rambling town-village, a thing of olden times, for whose presence one can hardly account. It was built, or rather, begun, as a monument of Catholicism; the country round it has become Protestant; itself has been protestantized; it has been disfigured by an incongruous heap of business-like pews; it is no longer accessible at every hour of the day, from Sunday to Sunday its walls re-echo no sound but the occasional tread of the pew-opener, as he dusts the seats of those who pay him for it; the soul has left the grey old pile; it is a stately corpse. What artist, however uncatholic in his belief, can contemplate those old Gothic churches, with their glorious tabernacles and other ornaments equally beautiful and equally disused, without painfully feeling what

[1] See sketch, "A Monk Dividing Enemies," Leighton House Collection, "Ulm, 1852."

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an almost deadly blow the Reformation was to High Art, what a powerful incentive it removed, irrecoverably? Who, in his heart of hearts, can but dwell with melancholy regret on the times when art was coupled with belief, and so many divine works were virtually expressions of faith? What a purifying and ennobling influence was thus exercised over the taste of the artist! an influence which nothing can replace. This influence was incalculably great; no dwelling was so humble but it owned a crucifix; no artist so poor in capacity but endeavoured to produce something not unworthy of his subject; the general *tone* of taste thus produced reacted on everything; witness the most insignificant doorlatch or ornament that remains to us from the Middle Ages. Is it not remarkable that the first artists of the modern day, in the higher walk of art, I mean, are *Catholics?* Cornelius and Steinle were born in the Church of Rome; Veit and Overbeck went over to it; Pugin, too, our great architect, was converted by his art to the Catholic faith.

August 15, Sunday.

"From Friedrichshafen a delightful sail took us across the emerald coloured Lake of Constance to Bregenz, where I parted from Steinle.

Pebble III.

August 21, Saturday.

"I am sitting at my window in the inn (hôtel, I'll trouble you!) at Meran. For the first time since I left Innsbruck I have leisure again to take up my pen. As I look back on my journey through the Tyrol, so far as it goes, I am forcibly struck with the reflection that my enjoyment of it has been much keener this time than ever it was before; this increased enjoyment has not, I feel, arisen from any external or adventitious circumstances; last time that I was in this lovely country, I contemplated it with ease and comfort from the rumble of our own carriage; this time I have jolted through it under all the disadvantages attendant on an *Eilwagen* and indifferent weather; it has arisen in the greater development

I make a reflection,

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of my artistic sensibilities, in my sharpened perception of the charms of nature, which discloses to me now a thousand beauties that found no echo in me when I saw them last. I congratulate myself on this reflection. If any man should be constantly penetrated with gratitude for a gift bestowed on him, it is the artist who has realised as his share a genuine love for nature; for his enjoyment, if he puts his gift to usury, increases with the days of his life.

and feel grateful.

"Another circumstance, which has greatly augmented my relish of the Tyrol, is that, at every step, it assumes more and more the character of my darling Italy; I have watched with fond anxiety every little token that whispered of the south; the gently purpling tints that steal gradually over the distant hills, as one advances towards the land of the amaranthine Apennines, the slow but steadily progressive change of vegetation, the gaunt and ragged fir giving way by degrees to the encroachment of a richer and more gently rustling shade, the anxiously watched gradations, the climax at last; the walnut, first, 'few and far between,' but warmly welcome, with its clustering leaves of juicy green; the chestnut, with its long, graceful, dark-hued foliage; the vine, again, no longer, as in the north, tied stiffly to a row of sticks (like a regiment of gooseberry bushes), but luxurious, wildly spreading, gracefully trained along rows of outward-slanting, basket-like trellis-work, and wreathed here and there by a pious hand up a roadside image of the Crucifixion in illustration of the words of Christ: '*I* am the true vine.' Now, too, the dark striped, portly pumpkins, with their gorgeous flame-like flowers, begin to appear, sometimes drowsily lolling under the tremulous shade of the mantling vines, sometimes basking with half-closed eyes down the unscorched lizard-haunted walls, sometimes trained across from house to house, hanging like Chinese lamps over the heads of the passers by. Presently, a *fig-tree*—two—three — more — plenty! A cypress — and, by Jove! look at

I get drunk with the anticipation of Italy,

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that terrace of stately, heavy-laden citron and orange trees! Nothing is wanting now but the olive. How could I pass by such dear old friends without loitering a little among them? A faithful lover, I return, after six years of longing absence, to the home of her of my inward heart; I hurry along, I have already crossed the garden gate, I breathe the air she breathes, I see from afar the bower where she dwells; but as I hasten along the well-known path, a thousand reminiscences of her arise from every object around me, and cling to me, and throw a gentle net across my faltering step, and whisper softly to my dream-wrapt brain—I am spellbound—I linger, even in my impatience.

and spout a parable.

"I must not forget the excessively picturesque appearance of all the towns and villages south of Innsbruck; long, narrow, tortuous streets, lined on each side with never-ceasing vistas of arcades, and enclosed by houses of most fancifully artistic irregularity; as one passes along the vaulted galleries the eye is constantly caught by some picturesque object; either the peasants, as they stroll along in their divers costumes, or the many-coloured, richly piled fruit stalls that every now and then fill the arches, or, through an open door, the endless depth of vaulted passages and fantastic staircases and irregular inward courts and yards, offering to the artist's eye a play of lights and shades and mysterious, dreamy half-tints that might shame even a Rembrandt or an Ostade. As the exterior of all the houses is (with the exception, of course, of the ornaments) scrupulously white, the streets, narrow as they are, reflecting, by the luminous nature of their local tint, the light of day into the remotest corner, have a most cheerful aspect.

"Of the Tyrolese themselves, three qualities seem to me to characterise them, qualities which go well hand in hand with, and, I think it is not fanciful to say, are in great measure a key to, their well-known frankness and open-hearted honesty. I mean Piety, which shines out amongst them in many little

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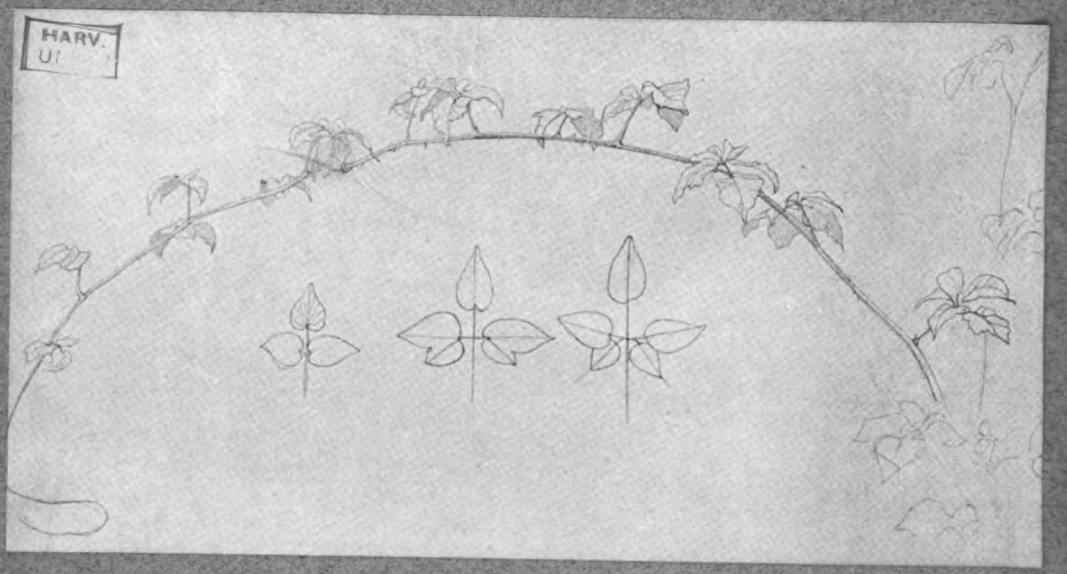
UNION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STUDY OF A BRANCH OF FIG TREE, 1856
Leighton House Collection

STUDY OF BRAMBLE, 1856
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things, a love for the art, which with them is, in fact, an outward manifestation of piety, and which is sufficiently displayed by the numberless scriptural subjects, painted or in relief, which adorn the cottages of the poorest peasants, and, last not least, a love for flowers (in other words, for nature), which is written in the lovely clusters of flowers which stand in many-hued array on the window-sills of every dwelling. The works of all the really great artists display that love for flowers. Raphael did not consider it 'niggling,' as some of our broad-handling moderns would call it, to group humble daisies round the feet of his divine representation of the Mother of Christ. I notice that *two plants*, especially, produce a beautiful effect, both of form and colour, against the cool grey walls: the spreading, dropping, graceful *carnation*, with its bluish leaves and crimson flowers, and the slender, antlered, thousand-blossomed *oleander*.

Pebble IV.

Statues in Innsbruck.

"One of the sights in Innsbruck has left on me a deep and, I hope, a lasting impression: the bronze statues in the Franciscan church; they are the finest specimens of German mediæval sculpture that I ever saw, and grew on me as I gazed at them in a manner which I hardly ever felt before; their great merit consists in combining in the most astounding manner the most consummate knowledge of the art with all the simplicity of nature and the most striking individuality (that first of artistic qualities), and exhibiting at the same time the most elaborate finish in the details, with greatest possible breadth and grandeur of general masses; this quality is particularly conspicuous amongst the women, three, especially, standing side by side, show, by three perfect examples, the whole secret of ornamental economy; the one, whose dress is ornamented with all the richness of which a luxurious imagination and an unparalleled power of execution were capable, recovers its simplicity of outline and mass by having a tightly

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fitting body and sleeve and a skirt of moderate amplitude; the second, whose ornaments, though richly, are more broadly disposed, retains its balance by a slightly increased amplitude of drapery; while the third, whose dress is altogether without embroidery, acquires a corresponding effect by large, loose
I take on, sleeves and richly folded skirt, and two large plaits hanging down her back. What an opportunity this would be, backed by these giants of breathing bronze, to make an indignant descent on some paltry and muddle-headed moderns, who don't know how to discriminate between that kind of finish which proceeds from the love of a smooth surface, and makes the artist equally careful of his pumps and of his pictures, and that other kind of minuteness which is the beautiful fruit of a refined love for nature, and proceeds from a feeling of piety towards the mother of art, and who complacently call 'niggling,' a quality above the appreciation of their *breadth-mad* brains; who, in their art-made-easy system of 'idealising' (forsooth), look for artistic 'beauty' in a facial angle of so and so much. What with the *Greeks* was an *abstract of* MAN, and very appropriately applicable in the cases of demi-gods (that the ancients *could*, and *did*, 'en tems et lieu,' individualise, may be sufficiently seen in their admirable portraits), becomes with *them* an absurdly misapplied *average of mankind*, not *a* man, or *men*. *The leading feature in Nature is a* MANIFOLD INDIVIDUALITY, AN ENDLESS VARIETY; *she is like a diamond, that glances with a thousand hues.* 'Indeed!' I hear them contemptuously sneering, 'you don't seem to be aware, sir, that ideal beauty is the great *centre*
and lay on, of all these *extreme* varieties, and the only thing worthy of a great artist's attention.' 'Well, gentlemen,' say *I*, 'without inconsistency, you can't get out of the way of the following mouthful: there are (perhaps you will allow) three elementary colours, which in different combinations produce every variety of hue; *but*, the great *centre* of these

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three *extremely* various colours is *grey, non-colour . . . the ideal of a bit of colouring, "the only thing worthy of the attention of a great colourist," is a picture with no colour in it at all.'* However, Messrs. the Generalisists and *Apollinisists* 'have every reason to congratulate themselves on the extensive circulation of their views, for their *ideal*' is visible in every haircutter's window. Never mind, I must contain myself—but the rod is in pickle!

but bottle it up again.

"A glorious amphitheatre of lofty mountains! On one side rugged, sternly rising, crenelated, grey, snow-strewn; on the other, dreamy, far outspreading, gently vanishing, southward luring, softly glowing, wrapt in tints of loveliest azure, gradually blending with the silver-fretted sky. A spreading, fertile gushing valley. Down the sunny, swelling slopes, across the embosomed plain, an endless, curling, wreathing flood of gold-green vines, foaming and eddying with purple grapes. Through the verdant waves, like rushes in a stream, the Indian corn raises its slender form and feathered head in long array. Beneath, outstretched at ease, the pumpkin winks and yawns. At the foot of a steep-fronted, purpling rock, skirting the glowing vineyards, a foaming mountain stream, emerald and silver. Along the heights, nestling in verdure, rise thickly scattered, castellated villas, looking, with their bright, white walls, like smiles on the face of the earth. An epitome of what is rich and joyous and unfettered in landscape. The Alpha and Omega of all that is charming in the Tyrol. MERAN!

Pebble V. Meran.

"I can say no more for it.

"To my mind, it is inferior to Italy only in one respect: it is wanting in that glowing, strongly marked individuality, that earnest beauty, that 'charm that is in melancholy,' which fascinates so powerfully in the land of wine and oil.

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Pebble VI. Italy!

"To be able to say that, on returning after long years to a country whose image memory has, during the whole of that time, fondled with all the partiality of ardent attachment, one has found one's best expectations realised, is, in this world of disappointments and frustrated expectations, indeed a rare thing; but to find imagination *surpassed* by reality is rarer still; yet it is my case now that I once more breathe the air and tread the soil of Italy. For this, I feel more grateful than I can say; for to have been disappointed in *these* hopes would have been to me the greatest of miseries; as it is, my enjoyment is a double one: that which is occasioned by the positive, intrinsic beauty of what I see, and that, not less great, of recalling at the same time a happy, long-dwelt-on past. This I have more particularly experienced since my arrival in Verona; and here a queer feature in my queer idiosyncrasy obtrudes itself to notice, *i.e.* the extraordinary dominion exercised over me by the senses of smell and hearing! That I do labour under these peculiarities I always knew, but to what a ludicrous extent, I did not find out till, on arriving here (Verona), I was suddenly seized by a gust of a thousand smells and a din of a thousand sounds, some always remembered, others long-forgotten, suddenly rising up again to my memory. I was spellbound, the veil of the past was torn up, I was fairly carried back against the stream of time. Ridiculous as it may sound, my enjoyment of Italy, independently, of course, of the art (which is an extraordinary tissue of reality and illusion), would be very imperfect without this combination of trifles. One thing, I think, must affect every one agreeably; I mean the exquisitely humorous cries of the vendors in the thoroughfares and market-places; who could hear and not remember the loud, expostulatory shriek with which the one dwells on the excellencies of his handkerchiefs, the argumentative and facetious tone in which another infers that comfort is not possible without a supply of his matches, that

I "realise," as the Americans say,

and find reason to think that I am a queer party.

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urgent wail with which a third deplores that man should have so little appreciation of his baked apples, the muddy, half-suffocated tenor with which a fourth proclaims his water-melons, or the rabid, piercing soprano which seems to warn the public that 'if those violets are not bought pretty quick, there will soon be none to buy'?"

Pebble VII. Verona.

"I do not think there exists anywhere a more powerfully and fantastically individual town than Verona; it is to Italy what Nuremburg is to Germany; but it is a transfiguration of Nuremburg; in point of wildly picturesque variety it defies description and surpasses expectation; it is saturated with art; wherever one turns, the eye is struck by some beautiful remnant of the taste—that was; of that glowing, sterling feeling for art, which spread itself over everything, and ennobled whatever it touched. Hardly a house that cannot boast of a sculptured archway, or some such token of ancient splendour; not a church, even the most insignificant, but is crowded with old paintings in oil and fresco, few of which are bad, some very good, a few excellent, but *all* in a far higher *tone of feeling* than nine-tenths of the shallow, papery daubs with which the nineteenth century covers its carcase of steam engines. No wonder—they are all scriptural or apocryphal subjects, and were all painted with an ardent belief in the faith to which they all owe their existence; from thence arose, amongst other excellencies, a certain naïf, ingenuously childlike treatment of the miraculous, which, combined with the manly dignity of consummate art, gives them an indescribable charm, which nothing can replace. Now—with us, at least, of the cold belief—men throw really eminent talents—*to the dogs*. But, for us Protestant artists, things are made much worse than they in any way need be, by the total rejection of pictures and statuary in our churches. Now, three centuries back, in the first ebullition of reformatory

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fanaticism, such a practice was not only comprehensible, but even a natural and necessary consequence and token of their total disavowal of everything approaching to the Romish form of worship; but its continuance at present amongst us is, not only contrary to the spirit of the Anglican Church, which after all, when compared to Lutheranism and Calvinism, is a *conservative* one, but is founded on arguments altogether untenable with any degree of consistency; for if, as we are told, pictures and statues distract the attention and produce a worldly frame of mind, if it be true indeed that works of *high art* (for, of course, no others are here taken into consideration), than which surely nothing is more calculated to raise the tone of the mind and prepare it for the reception of elevated impressions, have indeed so pernicious an effect, then, it is evident, by the same argument, the beauties of architecture, the eldest of the sister arts, must be equally rejected; at the sight of a Gothic church, that offspring of Christianity, we must shrug our shoulders and say with pious aversion: 'Vanitas vanitatum!' But the Church of England has not gone as far as that; indeed, great attention is paid to our Church's architecture; is there no inconsistency here? Or does the Church, terrified by the example of Romish image-worship, fear a similar evil amongst us, whose belief is so infinitely more circumscribed than that of Rome? Or is she so tender of admitting symbols into her bosom, she, whose corner-stone is a symbol: the Last Supper?

"To return to Verona.

Pebble VIII.

"As Gamba, owing to the time which my letter took in reaching him, was not able to meet me at the time appointed, I remained two days at Verona, days to which I shall always look back with unmixed pleasure. I indulged, this time (the more that I knew the town already), in the luxury of *not*

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'sight-seeing,' but strolled about the whole town in every direction, dropping into churches, staring at tombs and palaces and piazzas and pictures, just as if rolled past me in the ever-varying panorama. I was struck, in the Tyrol, with the profusion of flowers everywhere displayed; but here I see far more, and those, too, more artistically distributed; they rise in double and treble tiers on, in, and about the gracefully curved balconies, and assert their sway wherever human ingenuity makes it possible to place a flower-pot, and in a great many other places besides; creepers wreathe from window to window, and vines actually springing from holes in the walls, with no visible root or origin at all, spread their graceful mantle over the walls of crumbling palaces. Of the Veronese themselves, I cannot say that they are a handsome race; the women especially, though they have a great deal of character in their features, are generally far from good-looking. Amongst the peasants I saw some very fine men; they have, some of them, very good legs, slender and well shaped as a Donatello or a Ghiberti.

The Veronese love flowers,

and have good legs.

"On Thursday Gamba came, just as I was giving him up in a high state of despair and mystification. We hurried at once by Padua to Venice, where I found your letter.

Thursday, August 26.

Gamba.

"As I look through what I have written, before sending it off to you, I feel, painfully, that my style is clumsy, stuttering, incoherent; that I am wordy, without saying enough; that I am overfree in my use of fanciful epithets, without giving an adequate idea of the suggestive beauty of what I see; that I am sometimes almost mawkish, without saying half I feel; that I am incorrigibly slovenly and forgetful; that I can't write, that I can't spell. In answer to all this, I can only answer by referring to a little premonitory observation at the foot of my first page, *i.e. Quality of Pebbles not warranted.*

I look back and feel ashamed,

and make a clumsy excuse.

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BATCH No. 2.

". . . . . .

(This blank represents three weeks.)

Sept. 16. "*September* 16.—Many happy returns of the day, dear Gussy! The other day I took a pair of scales, and put into the one vessel the price you would have to pay for the postage of a congratulatory letter to be received by you on your birthday, and into the other a pleasure which a surprise might afford you; the postage outweighed its rival; so I wrote no letter. If my directions have been attended to, you will, no doubt, have received a far more satisfactory outward and visible sign of my good wishes.

Sept. 18. "*September* 18.—The same to you, Papa! . . . *Can the river offer its fountain a drink?*

Pebble I. Sept. 19. "Three weeks (apparently months) have elapsed since I last soared on the descriptive pinion; now, and only now, on the eve of my departure from Venice, I find time and leisure again to pour on the past a libation of pen and ink. I resume the quill with a feeling of disheartenment. With what intentions did I begin to write this (journal)? Had I not hoped to note down, at once and in all their freshness, my emotions and impressions just as I should receive them? and to speak also sometimes of the thousand little incidents that fall in one's path, and which form the arabesque round the chapter of life? And how are my hopes fulfilled? Behold me, on the morning of the last day, the day of parting, packing, paying, and passports, forced to throw in a hurried and disconnected heap a few general remarks concerning what I have seen and heard and felt and found, and not found, during my stay in the home of Titian. And even that, how difficult! For in this short stay, sight has succeeded sight, emotion has followed emotion, in one continued merry-go-round; I have been alternately

I lucubrate, when I consider, &c. &c., whereas, &c. &c., and even then, &c. &c.,

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grave and gay, melancholy and jocose, dejected and enraptured; add to this that in my mind, as in the dissolving views, one picture always effaces its predecessor, and you will at once perceive that I am in the position of a man trying to see the pebbles at the bottom of a muddy brook, or his natural face in a basin of gruel.

"Now, I again repeat what I made a preliminary condition: that I send you the pebbles, loose and disjointed, and that I don't undertake to make a necklace of them. but you know, &c.

"'But whose fault is all this?' (I hear you ask).

"During my stay here (I continue, without attending to your question) I have been up nearly every day *before the sun* (about five o'clock), and after working and tearing about the town all day, towards evening I was not sorry to . . . besides, it's not my fault.

"Do you guess how it was I wrote so little?

"Here a little observation obtrudes itself to my notice. Man (for there is nothing like throwing your own frailties on mankind in general) is born with an irresistible tendency to talk *at something or somebody*; eighteen pages back I was talking to nobody; or, if I did address anything, it was that very vague personage, the future; now I find myself getting more and more personal; *you's*, I expect, will soon get up to fifty per cent. A little digression

"Venice! Mighty word, city of endless associations, image that fills the mind! What impressions has it left on me? I shrink from answering a question so difficult to answer *fairly*, and from dissecting a point of such intricate anatomy. Whilst I think it over, I will give you a picture or two to look at; you shall have a peep out of the window where I sit writing. It is early morning, everything is cool and calm, in silent, almost breathless expectation of the not yet risen sun. Before your eyes rises one of the most splendid views in Europe, that of the Grand Canal from the steps of the Academy; the stately, Pebble II. A picture.

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dark green street of waters reflects on its wide-spreading mirror the grey and crumbling palaces, and the lovely form of Sta. Maria della Salute, with her domes of dazzling white. Not a ripple mars its glossy surface, except where, at rare intervals, some silent gondola glides swiftly along, scattering the sparkling drops from its graceful oar, or where, here and there, the playful 'aura mattutina' has left too rough a kiss upon its slumbering cheek. No sound is heard, but the distant, even, measured chimes, that seem to be rocking on the silence of the morning. Along its marge, singly, or clustering in close array beneath roofs of vine-covered trellis, lie the far-famed, ebon-coloured, swiftly gliding gondolas of Venice. 'Gondolas!' Whilst the sun is rising, let me say a word or two on gondolas. It has always excited my great surprise that these barks, which are graceful almost beyond imagination, are, in point of fact, in their present shape the offspring of a period, next to our own, the most execrable in point of taste which the world has produced. I mean the end of the seventeenth, or rather the beginning of the eighteenth century. Yet, so it is. In the time of Carpaccio and the Bellinis they were queer, tolerably uncouth contrivances, about two-thirds of their present length, pointed and equally curved at both ends, so as to resemble as nearly as possible a slice of melon, dead of the cholera. In Titian's day the shape began to taper out a little, and the iron points or knobs, *at both ends*, rose to a greater height, and were enriched with a serrated ornament; but they did not assume their present slender proportions and graceful ornament, *at the prow only*, till the eighteenth century; as also the mysterious and exquisitely comfortable little cabins or coffins, which now surmount them, and which formerly were open *behind and before*, forcing the passenger to sit upright! They contained then the rudiment of an idea of grace, which took its natural growth and development in spite of man. Meanwhile, for I have been watching him, the sun has

(Parenthetic Pebble about Gondolas.)

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appeared above the horizon; not that I see his own, real, glorious face, for he is hidden behind an ancient palace, but I see his reflection glowing in the eye of nature. First a gentle, tremulous, golden light began to steal along the dappled morning sky, warning all the little, distant, fleecy clouds to shake their plumes, for that it was going to begin; then, of course, the water took up the tune; and then (it was fit the biggest building should set the example) the 'Salute' assumed a saffron hue, and gradually one by one all the palaces on one side of the Canal, right up to our windows, and, did not you notice? your own face took quite a shine. For a while you yourself and everything round you seems wrapped in a trance; presently you begin to write. How is this? The whole picture begins to dance and quiver. Our Lady della Salute glows with a deeper blush, and trembles. Then, suddenly, her redness vanishes, her glorious countenance sparkles, and she raises her stately form in a garment of burnished silver; the gondolas that nestle round her feet, and hem in the whole length of the Canal, seem like a fillet of sparkling gems around a web of emerald and gold; the sky is a sea of light; the sun is in the wide heavens—it's time for breakfast. Waiter, coffee and rolls!

I am reminded,

"'Do you mean,' I hear you urge, 'to come to the point, and tell us how you like Venice?'

but take no notice. Pebble IV.

"Another picture! (pretending not to hear). The same scene, but under a different aspect. How different! Just now it was a scene of dawning life, a burst of gladness—now it is a mild, a gentle dream, an Italian moonlight night, a *Venetian* moonlight night—calm, clear, soft, fancy stirring. You lean idly out of the window; there are two of you, or ought to be, but you don't say anything to one another; you are rocked in silence; you feel the sweet, warm breath of night pass over your cheek; you think of Shakespeare's exquisite verses on what he never saw but with the eye of his

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boundless fancy; you are sitting with Jessica and Lorenzo (that is his name, I think) on a bank of violets; you are anxiously waiting for Portia and her company; your ear is attentive to every sound; presently a sweet, half-heard strain, like a distant echo, dawns on your ear; then it is lost again; again it swells, and seems to glide gently along the shadowy waters towards you, nearer, still nearer. You see a track of gleaming light along the water, and at intervals a shower of tiny stars; it's no illusion; they glide along towards you, the voices that rose from the distant waters; they are almost beneath your window. Quick, quick, a gondola; a dozen or more musicians, with every kind of instrument, sit together in a bark, and alternately play and sing lovely melodies by the musicians of Italy. As long as the strain lasts the oar is suspended, and the floating orchestra drifts slowly along with the slowly ebbing tide; round it, a cluster of gondolas, full of breathless listeners whose very soul seems to melt with the delicious sounds, and combine with them—at least, you can answer for yourself, for you are one of them. Those are moments which you, I am sure, will never forget.

You interrupt me, but I take no notice. Pebble V.

"'You are beating about the bush, we want an ans . . . .'

"Another picture! (taking no notice of you)—a bit of Giorgione, coloured by Veronese. You are in an *atelier;* pictures and sketches in different stages of advancement lie about the tables and cover the easels; at one end of the room you see a large cupboard; its open doors betray within layers of rich old silks and damasks, some made up, some in pieces, as they were found at the antiquary's; further, an old mandoline, that perhaps could tell of the days of Titian. Through the large, gaping window you look upon a group of the most picturesque Venetian houses, with their fanciful basket-shaped chimneys and irregular windows and thousand-fold tints; the foreground is gracefully supplied by a screen of slender, net-like trees, amongst which heavy-laden vines wreathe in

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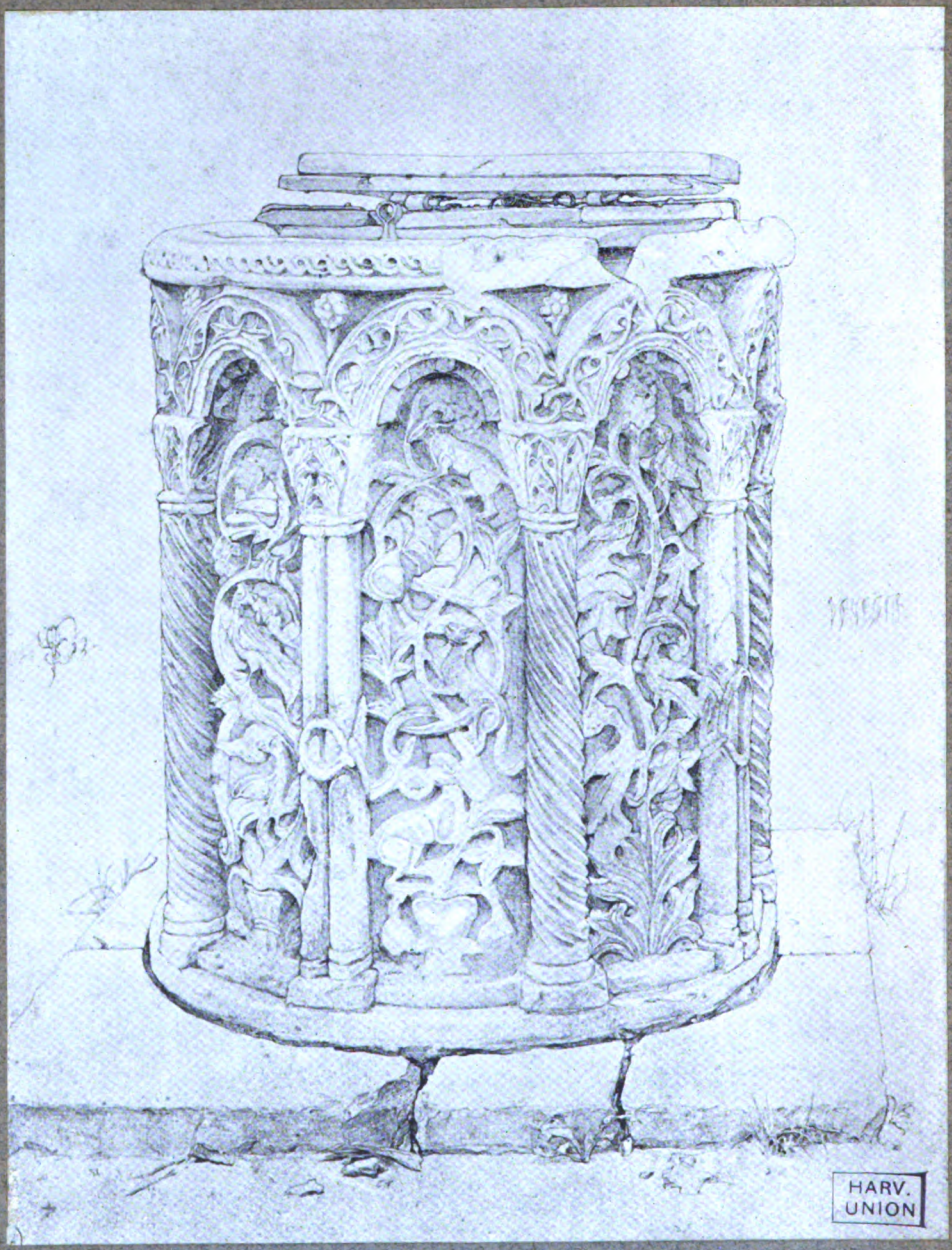

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STUDY OF BYZANTINE WELL HEAD. Venice, 1852
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fanciful festoons. But where is Werner? the amiable inmate of this charming snuggery; where his pupils? Ah, I hear them! Hark! in the garden, a merry laugh, a clattering of cups, a sound of several voices, a suggestion of enjoyment; you rush to the scene of action; on your road you nearly break your neck over a table covered with the remains of a hearty dinner. A few yards further, you see half-a-dozen young men (of course artists) stretched, in every variety of ingeniously comfortable attitude, on a temporary floor of Turkey carpets, in a cool, clear, shady spot beneath arches of roof-weaving vines; in the middle, at comfortable arm's length, coffee, and heaps of purple grapes, whilst the intervals of conversation are filled by affectionate and earnest appeals to long Turkish pipes. You approach; you are recognised; seized by the hand, thrown down on the carpet; and presently you perceive that an entire afternoon is gone by! But that afternoon becomes a landmark to you. May not such reminiscences well endear a place to one's memory?

"'Well, then, I suppose . . .' (say you).

"Never mind, let me continue.

More where the rest came from.

"Another impression. You are sitting, early in the morning, in a spacious, picturesque court; you have got your sketch-book, and you are busily poring over a drawing of a beautiful old Saracenic well; you are intent on doing it well, on cutting out that friend you have got with you. Presently you are seized with a peculiar sensation; you have heard, all of a sudden, the voice of an old, old friend, who speaks to you of things you don't see round you; a veil falls from your eyes; you feel that you have missed something for some time past; a vision rises before your eyes—a sweet vision of wooded hills and grassy fields, teeming with a thousand wild flowers and sending forth a sweet smell, and of flowing streams, of *fresh* waters, of birds singing merrily as they fly from tree to tree, and swing on the

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slender branches; and then you remember that you dwell in a mysterious city, closed in by the salty sea. Who was the friend that called up these lively images in your mind? It was a poor, solitary, wandering *Bee*. But he suggested something else to you, the roaming honey-gatherer—he reminded you of *freedom;* reminded you that Freedom had no home *there;* and he made you *feel* how much you had felt it, how much you had been unconsciously haunted by the breath of oppression that hovers over poor, browbeaten Venice, and whose pestilence clings to its rocky shore, as the rankling seaweed to the skirts of its palaces. Poor Venice! once resounding with joyous voices, now its walls seem, as you pass them, to mutter mournfully of arrests, condemnations, executions! Its narrow streets re-echo with the heavy tread of exulting soldiers, with the watchword of a foreign tongue. Palaces and convents are become barracks and infirmaries, and Slavonian troopers loll and spit where the proudest lords and loveliest ladies of Venice used to assemble to the banquet or the ball. But I turn away from such sad reflections, lest they may seem to outweigh all the delight that I have spoken of before.

"I have rehearsed to you a few of my impressions for good and for evil, and I think that was the only way of answering your (imaginary) questions. I need make no apologies for not *describing* Venice to you, as you have all seen it, and it is a place the image of which does not easily fade. I might say a word or two about the Venetians. Whatever some people may say (and, if I am not mistaken, Byron amongst them), the female Venetian type, such as it is transmitted to us by Titian, Giorgione, Pordenone, &c. (*i.e.* stout, tall, round-faced, small-mouthed, *Roxolane-nosed*) has either totally disappeared, or only manifests itself to a chosen few; one feature only I recognise, and that is a profusion of fine hair, which they plait in the most elaborate manner. A thing

Pebble VI.

What I think about it.

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that rather puzzles those who go to Venice with the idea of seeing *Titians* and *Veroneses* at the windows and in the streets, is that the women have altogether left off dyeing their hair auburn as they used in former times. To show you that vanity made the fair sex go through the greatest personal discomfort as far back as the sixteenth century, I will tell you what the process of dyeing was. On the top of nearly every house in Venice is a kind of terrace-like scaffold, or scaffold-like terrace ('you pays your money and takes your choice'), which has the noble vocation of drying linen; in former days, however, they were built for a different purpose. In the middle of the day, during the greatest heat of the sun, the party anxious to impart to her hair a tint between sugar-candy and radishes repaired to these *lofty* spots, and there regularly bleached her hair in the following manner: she put on her head the *brim* of a large straw hat, so that the top of the head was exposed to all the power of the sun, whilst the face and neck were kept in the shade. Through the hole thus left in the middle of this extraordinary headgear the whole of the hair was drawn, and spread out as much as possible; which done, different kinds of waters, made for the express purpose, were passed over it by means of a little sponge fastened to the top of a reed. History does not give the exact number of *coups-de-soleil* caught in this manner; a few, I should imagine. However, I can warrant the accuracy of my statement, which is borrowed from a contemporary author of the highest standing. The men of Venice are neither handsome in the face nor well made in the body. The Venetian dialect is amusing; in the mouth of a woman, if well spoken, it is pretty, musical, childlike, lisping; but in the mouth of a man, for the most part, muddy, stammering, unintelligible.

"There, much as still remains to say, and willingly as I

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dwell on its memory, I must discard Venice, and turn to your kind letter, for it is now, I am afraid, more than a month since I last wrote. This delay has, however, been unavoidable, for when one is travelling, or staying a short time in a place, one is always hurried and flurried in the day-time, and in the evening tired or excited—or both. Next time you hear from me (which will be when I reach Rome) my communication will openly take the shape that this has imperceptibly been attaining, that of a letter; when I am once settled for the winter I shall, I hope, be better able to write *au jour le jour*. Before entering into your letter, which will be a longish job, I must acknowledge the receipt of one from Papa, containing part of my remittance; it was written in most kind terms (I tell you this because you can't have seen it, since he wrote in London), and was, I think, the longest I ever got from him, at all events it was the first in which he said anything beyond what was necessary to business. It gave me sincere pleasure. I was touched, it seemed to me that distance had brought me nearer to him; pray thank him both for that and for the consideration with which he has provided for an emergency which will in fact arise—that of my not reaching Rome in October; I do not expect to get there until the first week in November. Of one thing I must remind Papa; he talks of sending to Rome the *remaining eighty* pounds of my second quarter; he has, I am afraid, forgotten that he gave me sixty for my first; my remittance this time is only *forty* pounds, he therefore has only twenty to send to Rome.

"I now turn to your letter, dear Mamma; I lay it by my side, and as I read it slowly through, answer it systematically, head for head, for in my present hurry I have indeed no time to pick and choose, or to arrange my topics according to their importance and interest, or even to consult as much as I wish the little amusement that my letters give you. However, I console myself a little with the reflection that it certainly is not the composition of my letters which gratifies you much,

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for I am painfully aware that my ideas are brought to paper with about as much order as the footprints of a cock-sparrow show on a gravel-walk.

"You say, dear Mamma, that you have a fear of not telling me all that I wish to hear; and there, indeed, you are right, for if you were to tell me *all* that I wish to know about your doings, you might write for a week; but you are equally right in supposing that *whatever* you write concerning yourself (and selves) is full of interest to your distant Punch. About my health? Well, I plead guilty, steaks *do* still continue to be to me *physical consciences;* this admonitory part they took more especially at Venice, where the climate, I must confess, did not agree with me particularly well. This is perhaps attributable to the water, which was particularly bad there, for my diet was of the simplest description. Judge for yourself: in the morning early, coffee and dry bread (I have discarded butter to keep company with Gamba, who is not in the habit of eating any); at eleven or so, fruit and bread; at four or five, a simple dinner; and in the evening, an ice or a cup of coffee. Here I live much in the same way.

"I am truly delighted to hear that you are accommodating yourself a little to an English climate; if you once get over that one great obstacle, nothing else need prevent your establishing yourself in the country which, after all, is still the dearest to you; with the prospect of pleasant and desirable society for yourself and the girls, and of other resources for Papa, there is every reason to hope that you will find in Bath what you have so long wished for, a home in *England.*"

Speaking of his elder sister's suffering, he continues:—

"I feel, almost, a kind of shame that so much should have been poured down on me, who have deserved it less. To become deserving of it, must be my great, never-wavering

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endeavour; I will put my talent to usury, and be no slothful steward of what has been entrusted to me. Every man who has received a gift, ought to feel and act as if he was a field in which a seed was planted that others might gather the harvest.

"I am delighted to hear that Lady Leighton is getting on well, and as much gratified at having made on her a favourable impression; pray tell her that her presence and conversation inspired me with a desire to please her, and that her affectionate reception has still a lively hold on my memory.

"You tell me that you were touched at Steinle's kindness to me, and indeed it was such as might well touch any one; this time you will be touched at his affliction, poor man, he has just had a heavy misfortune—the most affectionate of fathers has lost another child, the second, in a year and a half; I heard this from André, who has just arrived from Frankfurt, and who called on the unfortunate man before he started and found him much dejected. He said in his melancholy but calm tone of voice: 'Ich habe eine Tochter begraben.' You think it improbable that I shall find a *second* Steinle; I delight in the belief that there *is none.*

"I am not surprised at your finding it impossible to imagine an artist without a genuine love for nature. In any but an age of perverted taste such a thing could not exist; but it is only too true that that most essential of qualities has become obsolete, and is hardly to be found at all. Artists now are full of *breadth* and *depth;* and, between us and the doorpost, *flatness.* On this subject I mean to tell you more in my next letter, when I speak more particularly of my *artistic* impressions and opinions, which I have not yet done.

"I am glad to hear what you tell me about the comfort you enjoy in Bath, from the superior cleanliness and decency of behaviour of English servants over foreign ones; it is a

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thing to which I am particularly alive, and which struck me very much last time I was in England; Gussy too, I am sure, appreciated it very much. I am sorry that I cannot participate in your enthusiasm about the beauties of Bath (barring, of course, the situation, which is charming), but I will say nothing against it, as I am only too glad that you should be pleased with it. I quite follow you in your admiration of the edifices in Westminster; I think that, taking them altogether, they form one of the finest groups of architecture that I ever saw; but what particularly pleases me in the Houses of Parliament is the example they set of building in that style of architecture which is our own, the growth, as it were, of our soil, and which therefore best befits our country. Such feelings, I have reason to believe, are becoming prevalent in England, and they may have great results; but I reserve all this for another letter. I am glad to hear of the institution you tell me of for the cultivation of good principles; I believe that the greatness of England will not be as ephemeral as that of the other nations that have had the lead in succession, because so much is done to consolidate and increase in strength the basis on which it stands, and which is the best prop to the enduring prosperity of a nation, uprightness and morality.

"I have now followed and answered your letter, from beginning to end, from point to point, it is time I should close; next time I write, I shall be in Rome, settled for the winter.—Believe me, dear Mamma, with very best love to all, your most affectionate and dutiful son,

"FRED LEIGHTON."

Translation.]

VENICE, 31*st August.*

"HONOURED AND VERY DEAR HERR STEINLE,—If I did not, according to our agreement, write to you directly Rico[1]

[1] Count Gamba.

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arrived, it was because I could not make up my mind to put you off with two words, whereas I had neither time nor leisure to write you anything detailed. Now, however, arrived and established in Venice, I take up my pen to repair the neglect. It is a lovely, cool, clear summer morning; I sit at my window on the Grand Canal, and before my eyes rises in glorious beauty the incomparable outline of Sta. Maria della Salute with the adjoining Dogano. The newly risen sun (it is five o'clock in the morning) throws a golden, enchanted light along one side of the Canal; the gondolas and barges, which nestle in a numerous array at the steps of the *Salute*, glitter in the dusky distance like gleaming jewels on the borders of the silver mirror of the water, whose clear bosom is gently ruffled by the soft breath of dawn. All is still, except the distant church bells. What words can give an idea of such a sight? I gaze about me in a day-dream and think of you, the dear friend, the honoured master; all that I owe you for heartfelt sympathy and wise guidance, and cannot pay, rises before my grateful soul, and reminds me that I have lost one whom I shall miss many a time. I hope with all my heart that your stay in the mountains of Appenzell will have given you fresh strength, and that in all respects you are re-established and invigorated according to your expectations.

"Now, however, as I am to speak of myself, and to give some account of my impressions on my journey, I note that for me the potent picture of Italy, of Venice, has pushed all that went before into the background, almost blotted it out, so that now it floats before me like a dim remembrance; but with two exceptions: two pictures have impressed themselves deeply on my memory, and will certainly not be easily erased—I mean the *Franciscan church at Innsbruck* and lovely *Meran*. You were indeed right when you said that the cast giants in that church are the grandest achievement

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of German sculpture; they are colossal, a truly imposing spectacle, brilliant monuments of an age of noble taste. What eternal truth! What an amazing impress of individuality! Of marvellous execution that never borders on the little, full of breadth and strength, and yet nobly slender, they are the most perfect example of *economy of detail;* what a sharp contrast to the superficial stone-hammering (I might say) of to-day; what an everlasting shaming to the nineteenth century! I could name many sculptors who could not look at these things without profit.

"Meran! What an indelible, fascinating picture floats before one's eyes at the name; this Alpha and Omega of all that is lovely in Tyrol; this lovely amphitheatre of mountains, rugged on one side, and steep and covered with snow on the other, glowing in the purple gleam of the south—widely extended, melting away, alluring; this fertile plain; this gold-green flood of climbing vines, hanging down like waterfalls from the espaliers on the mountain slopes, with the purple foam of the vines; these thousand pleasure-houses and castles; the picturesque costume!

"But why so many words? You have seen this beauty yourself, and have no doubt a clearer picture of it than I can paint for you.

"In Botzen, to my very great regret, I was unable to see Herr von Hempel, since he was staying, not in his town house, but in a castle at a distance of two hours; but I visited Becker's brother. He received me in a most friendly manner, asked much after his brother, of whom he had heard *nothing* for more than a *year*, and told me that his mother, who had recently visited him in Feldkirch, had wept bitterly about it. I must also inform you that he has recently *taken unto himself a wife*—a fact of which our good Jacob (that is his name, is it not?) also knew nothing.

"I could still, dear Herr Steinle, write much to you

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about Tyrol and Italy (especially about *Verona*), for I know no one with whom I so gladly share my artistic sensations as with you, but lack of time obliges me to close quickly for the present; I will only add that after I had been two days in Verona the worthy Rico arrived, and we are now having a *feast of art* in Venice together.

"Should you be still at the Stift when you receive these lines, I beg you to kiss the Frau Rath's hand for me, and to tell her that I remember vividly the day I spent in her house. Remember me most kindly to your wife—I congratulate her upon her deliverance from the Cronberg martyrdom; kiss the little children for me, and remember me to the elder ones; remember me also to Frau Schöff & Co. and to all my other good friends; this is perhaps rather a large request, but whom could I omit? I rely upon your kindness. I close with a plea for forbearance towards my incorrigible writing and my lame, headlong style.—Heartfelt greetings from your devoted and grateful pupil,

"FRED LEIGHTON.

"*P.S.*—Should you have anything to say to me, or any commission to give me, the address, Poste Restante, Florence, will find me till the end of September.

"Gamba wishes to be cordially remembered to you, and promises himself to be under your wing again in eighteen months.

"In my next letter I will tell you about Italy."

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CHAPTER II

ROME

1852–1855

THE first group of letters from Leighton to his family from Rome tells of his instalment, his projects, his disappointments, his indifferent health, and his eye-troubles. But more important are the views he expresses on his "*artistic* impressions," and the ideas which force themselves on his mind, resulting from these impressions; the increased anxiety with which he regards the task he has set before him; the "paralysing diffidence" which he feels with regard to "composing." In the letter he wrote on January 5, 1853, he enters more intimately into his own feelings in addressing his father than in any previous letter I have seen. This letter is in answer to one from his father, which Leighton describes in writing to his mother[1] as "the longest I ever got from him, at all events it was the first in which he said anything beyond what was necessary to business; it gave me sincere pleasure. I was touched; it seemed to me that distance had brought me nearer to him." Leighton was evidently eager to respond to any advance from his father towards possible intimacy on the ground of his art-interests. In "Pebbles" he writes that he opens the "introductory chapter of the second volume" of his life, "a volume on the title-page of which is written 'artist'"; in these first letters from Rome he begins the second volume itself. The letter to his younger sister, on her "coming out," contains at its close memorable advice on the subject of the development of her musical taste.[2] "You must descend into

[1] See page 83. [2] Page 97.

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yourself, and draw at the fountain of your own natural taste, but mind you go very deep, that you may really get at your *genuine*, *natural* taste, and I think you won't go far wrong. He who knows how to hear the voice of nature has found the safest guide, and he only is a good master who opens the mind of his pupil to that voice." At the age of twenty-one, Leighton had realised, and was himself pursuing, the only right course in studying any art. By invariably drawing deeply from the fountain in his own nature, he ever remained true and sincere as an artist. It is evident that, if there is no fountain to draw from in a nature, any study of art becomes useless, and Leighton, when consulted in later years, never encouraged false hopes in those who possessed no natural endowments. When he wrote,[1] "being very receptive and prone to admire, I have learnt, and still do, from innumerable artists, big and small; Steinle's is, however, the indelible seal," he referred to the fact that in Steinle he had fortunately found the master who opened his mind to the voice of his own nature. Leighton felt a great necessity to sift the various influences which played upon his receptive nature, on account of his ready sympathy with all that was admirable. He had constantly to seek for that inner light, that "genuine, natural taste," which his revered master had led him to search for and find, and to act from the dictates of that light, and from no other.

The commencement of the first letter from Rome to his mother is missing; the date of the post-mark is November 25, 1852, Rome.

" . . . unnoticed, and which now requires to be woven in with the rest. I mean, of course, my more directly and practically *artistic* impressions, and their results. I take them up 'ab ovo.' To an artist an occasional change of scene

[1] Page 26, "Introduction."

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is of the greatest advantage, if not importance; for, generally speaking, when he has stayed long in one place, surrounded day after day by the same objects, his eye becomes, by the deadening effect of constant habit, indifferent to what he sees around him, and often even inaccessible to the impressions which a newcomer might receive from the same natural beauties; most things that please the eye or the imagination, do so (in my case, at least) by some peculiar association; indeed I should imagine it must be so with all things, for even when one cannot (as one often can) define precisely the association which creates the echo within of the impressions received, it seems to me that one is instinctively aware of a kind of indefinable *innate relationship* to the beauties manifested in nature, to which, by-the-bye, I think, all other associations might ultimately be traced through different degrees of consanguinity. It is in being unexpectedly reminded (however indirectly or unwittingly) of this affinity, that lies all the pleasure that we experience by the means of sight; indeed, it strikes me, although I am too ignorant to explain why, that the 'feu sacré' of the artist is a kind of inward, spontaneous, ever active, instinctive *impulse*, blind and involuntary, to manifest and put forth this his pedigree—as it were a yearning of son to father, an attraction of a part to the whole, which is, as it were, the living *motive* and condition of his existence, and which sometimes infuses in his works 'un non so chè' that is felt by others, but for which he would be at a loss to account, and of which he is perhaps barely aware; it is a manifestation of a *truth* which is felt to be *fit*, and called *beautiful*. These reflections, which have often involuntarily forced themselves on me, suddenly remind me of an expression I once heard Papa quote from some German philosopher, I think Hegel: 'Der Mensch ist das Werkzeug der Natur.' Good gracious, where am I running to? and how

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far out of my depth! and yet one feels the want to empty one's head a little now and then; latterly, especially, these ideas have been stirred up in me by the perusal of fragments on the theory, philosophy, of Art, &c., by Eastlake, which gave rise in me to some painful feelings. At the first onset I was amazed and bewildered at the quantity and great versatility of Eastlake's acquirements, a man who has yet found time to cultivate his art with success. I was filled with regret and mortification when I looked at myself and considered how little I know, and how little, comparatively, my health and eyes will allow me to add to my meagre store. As I got further into the subject, my feelings altered; it seemed to me to grow more and more vast and comprehensive, but not more *intricate*, for it appeared by degrees to embrace and involve in itself (and be involved in) all human knowledge, so that I felt that there must be only one key to all mystery, the *non*-possession of which key is the characteristic, the condition *des Menschseins*. Then it struck me as utterly absurd for anybody to pretend to know anything about anything; but it also struck me that it is not given to man to be a neutral spectator, that he must advance or recede; and that beautiful saying of Lessing's, which Papa read to us, occurred to my mind: 'Wenn der Allmächtige' (I quote from memory, and therefore probably not quite correctly) 'vor mich hin träte, in der Rechten die vollkommene Erkenntnis, in der Linken ein ewiges Streben nach Wahrheit, ich würfe mich flehend in seine Linke und sagte: Vater, gieb! die reine Wahrheit ist doch nur Dir allein!'[1] I hardly meant to say all this, especially as it must seem horridly weak to a philosopher of Papa's calibre, but I

[1] "If the Almighty were to come before me, with absolute knowledge in his right hand, and perpetual striving after truth in his left, I would fling myself to his left, praying: Father, give! pure truth is thine alone."

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really could not help it; I wish such thoughts would never come into my head, for I am painfully aware that I have not the grasp of mind to investigate any abstract subject deeply, and I wish that I had a mind, simple and unconscious, even as a child. I hurry back to the point with my tail between my legs; I was saying, was not I? that habit deadens us (read *me*) to the *suggestive* qualities of nature, and that change of scene is sometimes required to make us again *aware* of nature; after such change she speaks a more eloquent language than ever; I have heard her voice, ever since I left Frankfurt, ring more powerfully than ever before, and it has been the key to all that I have done, and to all that I have omitted. But there are some cases in which this numbing effect of habit has more lasting, almost irrevocable consequences; when one has been for a long space of time *utterly* familiarised with an object (a work of art in particular) of which one did not, when the acquaintance or *liaison* was contracted, appreciate all the beauties, though in process of time the *understanding* may become fully aware of these qualities, the *heart of the mind*—if I may use such an expression—can never feel that ingenuous fulness of admiration which would penetrate a sensitive and cultivated spectator on seeing it *for the first time.* This I have felt more particularly in the case of the 'Transfiguration' here in the Vatican; I am so utterly familiar with it from a child, when I could in no way understand it, that I find it impossible to judge of it *objectively;* I see colossal merit in it, and yet, when I have looked at it for a few minutes, I turn away and walk on; I am deadened to it. Thank God, it is not so with his (Raphael's) divine frescoes, which are so maimed and profaned in the engravings that the originals were *new* to me. But I am at the end of my paper, and as you do not wish me to cross, I must this time close by just telling you what my disappointments have been, that you may not

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form a false idea of them. First, I expected to find an *atmosphere* of high art, and every possible 'günstige Anregung' for its cultivation; in this I have been completely disappointed; of the numberless artists here, scarcely any can call themselves historical painters, and Gamba and I, who hoped for emulation, are thrown completely on ourselves; Overbeck is the only remains of that much to be regretted period when he and Cornelius and Veit and Steinle and others were labouring together in friendly strife; he will, however, never be to us what Steinle was. The next greatest sore point was the difficulty of getting a studio. When we arrived in Rome the first thing we heard was that all the *ateliers* were taken; and it was only after some days despondent search that I got a little bit of one most skimpingly furnished, that I should have sneered at when I first arrived. I have no *sécrétaire;* I am obliged to lock up my papers with my shirts; I have been obliged to buy a lamp, for the one they gave me tried my eyes; and if I want any article of furniture I must buy it, because I understand that at the end of the year hiring costs as much here as buying. My *atelier* for next winter I shall take in the spring, as a good many become vacant at that time. Rome is twice, nearly three times, dearer than Florence in some respects; I am in despair; Gamba, who has just half what I have, absolutely starves himself in his food, and can hardly keep himself cleanly dressed; yet he has fewer expenses than I, who have calls to make now and then, and must dress accordingly. Oakes, too, who had sent me a charming letter to Florence, saying that he delighted in the idea of coming to spend the winter with me in Rome, was suddenly prevented; this was a bitter disappointment; I had expected a great deal of improvement from his conversation. I am in the bleak position of one who stands in immediate contact with *no* cultivated and superior mind. The Laings have not come yet; I hope

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to goodness they won't disappoint me also.—I remain, dearest Mamma, your dutiful and affectionate son,

"FRED LEIGHTON."

(*La suite à un prochain numéro.*)

"1852.

"DEAREST GUSSY,—As a gallant brother, I can't well do less than answer separately your postscript to Mamma's letter. I shall make a point, if I meet with it, of reading Andersen's 'Dichterleben'; your recommendation is sufficient to predispose me favourably. I perfectly understand what you say about St. Paul's, and quite agree with you on that subject. What suits a salmon-coloured ribbon? By George, that's a weighty question, and requires mature reflection; it would look *best* on a white dress with blue flowers or spots; a sea-green would not look bad, and on black silk it would be *distingué;* a bluish violet would not be bad either. I am sincerely sorry that I am not able to 'assister' at your triumphal entry into your eighteenth year; I am afraid the spell is beginning to fall by degrees from the greatest of days. If my directions have been attended to, I was present by proxy on the memorable occasion. Do you fully appreciate the immense importance of the epoch? Do you sufficiently feel that you are on the brink of being *OUT?* You are very much mistaken in supposing that I hear much good music here; there is little or none to hear; the theatres, at least, are all bad. I sincerely hope that you cultivate assiduously the talent with which you are blessed; especially the vocal part I am very anxious about; of course you will take lessons in Bath. I sympathise very much with you on the want of Rosenhain's guiding influence; I fully appreciate your difficulty; you must descend into yourself, and draw at the fountain of your own natural taste, but mind you go very deep, that you may really get at your *genuine, natural* taste,

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and I think you won't go far wrong. He who knows how to hear the voice of nature has found the safest guide, and he only is a good master who opens the mind of his pupil to that voice.—Believe me, with many kisses, your very affectionate brother, FRED.

"If Gussy *did* want to be a charitable Christian, she would copy in her pretty handwriting five lines a day of my horrid scrawl, for I am ashamed that my Pebbles should remain in such a state."

"BATH, *Sunday, November* 29, 1852.

"MY BELOVED CHILD,—I need not tell you how close an account I keep of the day of the month, nor how my heart beats as the foreign post hour approaches, because you know how tenderly I love you, and what it cost me to part from you, and consequently how anxiously I look for the consolation for your absence which your letters afford me, and I had hoped you would supply this balm liberally. Of course while you were actually travelling I made every allowance for weariness, &c. &c., but if you have carried out your intentions, you must have been in Rome quite ten days, and though I said in my last I hoped for the future you would leave only three weeks between each of your letters home, it is now more than a calendar month since I had last the great happiness of seeing your handwriting. I would not, my love, be unreasonable, but you must remember that, in addition to the natural desire to hear how you manage for yourself, my maternal anxieties have been awakened by the indisposition you spoke of as not serious, it is true, but which has started up before me, explaining your delay in writing, and which, in spite of reason's suggestion that a slight illness would not hinder your work, whilst Gamba would prevent the addition of suspense to the trouble a serious attack would

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cause us, has brought the evil of separation very bitterly before me. The goodness of your heart, my child, will teach you how you can soften this to me; it is one of the few occasions remaining to you to exercise self-denial, as you live alone and have no one to please but yourself. I now and then wonder a little anxiously whether you ever think of my exhortations, so much have I wished that you should be in the retirement of your house as gentlemanly as you are in company. But then I recollect sentences in your letter, proving such right views in important matters, such a clear understanding of your responsibilities, that I resolve to believe that you will strive to do right in small matters as well as in great ones; indeed, my child, I have remarked with deep satisfaction your appreciation of the blessings that are allotted to you, and indeed you do right to enjoy them with all humility, for I cannot flatter you in opposition to the dictates of my conscience that you are *so* well deserving of happiness as your poor sister. She is deserving of the highest respect of all, bearing all her trials with admirable patience. The persevering rain, which has caused a great deal of illness in Bath, has had a very bad effect on her, throwing her back just as she was beginning to mend, so that she has a great deal of rough ground to go over again. We revel in literary abundance, even German and French books are in the circulating libraries, and *I* often wish the days longer to read and to work. Gussy says she hopes you will not think her ill-natured if she declines copying your letters, for, indeed, were she willing to undertake this difficult task, I should forbid it, as her eyes, always delicate, are unusually weak; whether this comes from too long confinement to the house, or from crying, I cannot say; the latter is produced by *Heimweh!* what do you think of this for an English girl? Thank God, she employs the best remedy against regretful feelings, as she is occupied from morning

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till night. Are you equally industrious? I read the other day the following assertion by Southey, which I copy for you, in case you should *still* have the habit, so common amongst young people, of wasting during the day occasional quarter-hours or ten minutes, because, they ask, only such a few minutes, how often have I heard that excuse. This is the portion: 'Ten minutes' daily study, for seven years, will give the student sufficient knowledge of seven languages to read them with ease, and even to travel without an interpreter in the respective countries.' Is not this an encouragement to industry? We imagine you by this time settled in your lodging and beginning to feel at home. God grant that you may have your health there and meet with kind friends; we are curious to know what your letters will do for you. In the meantime you will, I doubt not, have met some old acquaintances—the Henry Walpoles, the Laings, Mr. Petre, the Isembourgs, and Princess Hohenlohe; to what amount the latter will condescend, I know not, but remember, I entreat you, my advice. The two former families you will most likely have first met at church; let me hope at least that you will not abandon the habit; it may at last bring a blessing upon you. The intentions of your Frankfurt acquaintances we learnt in a letter from Mme. Beving; she had heard from M. Fenzi that he had given you a general invitation to his villa, and that you had dined with him, or been asked to do so; I do not know whether he made any comment on you. Did your organ of *veneration* do its duty? Forgive my hints, dear son; all your good qualities are pictured in lively colours before my eye, but I do not even try to forget your faults, lest I should neglect my duty to you; with the best resolutions we all occasionally require a fillip to our conscience. Next Friday is your birthday. It will be the first on which you have not received your parents' blessing in person. We shall not forget you, my darling.

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God bless you, my own dear Freddy; in this prayer your father joins most fervently; think often of the advice and love of your devoted mother, A. LEIGHTON."

1 BROCK STREET, BATH,
December 13, 1852.

DEAR FREDERIC,—I need not say that we had all of us great pleasure in receiving your letter from Rome, though not before your dear mother had suffered great anxiety from the delay—the greater, because your former letter did not give a very encouraging account of your health. It gave us also great pain to hear of the vexatious disappointments which have attended your first entrance into the Eternal City, but this was, perhaps, to be expected, as the sanguine expectations of youth are seldom realised, and we may hope that by this time you will have found in other advantages and opportunities for improvement a sufficient compensation for the loss of those you had expected. What you say about the weakness of your eyesight is far more serious, and, indeed, would have occasioned us alarm if we did not hope and believe that you meant no more than we already knew at Frankfort, that your eyes were weak, and not that they had continued to grow weaker. But when I consider that your only means of acquiring an honourable independence and gratifying your laudable ambition depends upon your eyesight, I surely need no arguments to urge you in the strongest manner to use all those precautions for its preservation which your own good sense must suggest—to throw aside your brush or pencil the first moment that your eyes begin to smart or water, not to draw on white paper or by candlelight (or lamp or any artificial light), nor read except large print, nor small print even by daylight, except for a few minutes occasionally in a book of reference, and to acquire as much knowledge as you can, independently of books, by conversation with well-informed men, if you are so fortunate as to meet with them; when you cannot paint, talk, or observe, exercise your memory, it will store and cultivate your mind more and try your eyes less than reading, which in your case cannot be systematically pursued. You may perhaps meet some well-informed young men amongst the German artists. Above all,

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draw your compositions as large as possible (or rather as necessary for your eyes) and not such as your architectural drawings, "Four Seasons," &c., which contain so many objects minutely drawn. I suppose, likewise, that chalk and charcoal must be better than pencil, and the paint-brush better than either. You have no reason to complain either of want of ideas or of power of expressing them (at all events with your pen), however deficient you may think yourself in a command of language for conversation; but the fact is that, considering the distance that separates us, it is of much more importance to us to know *how* you are, what you do, and what you observe, than what you think. Your letters remind me of my friend, Dr. Simpson of York, who, when we sat down for dinner, would enter into some abstract discussion, say, of the nature and varieties of fish, or, *à propos* of the aitch-bone, on the homologies of the skeleton, while in the meantime fish and beef were growing cold and my appetite impatiently vivacious; so in your letters, while we are burning with impatience to know how you are, what progress you are making, or at all events what are your opportunities of progress in the art, you indulge us with abstract reflections on the theory of art in general. Your last letter, it is true, begins and ends with interesting matter, but with an interpolation of some three pages of disquisition on the nature of genius in art, &c., &c., which, however well thought or expressed, would be more in place in an essay than in your letter to us who are so much more interested in what immediately concerns yourself. The consequence is that, although with a praiseworthy wish to please us you have tried your eyes with a long letter, you have omitted much we were anxious to know—whether, for instance, you were conscious of having made any progress, or derived any advantage from the many pictures both in art and nature you have had so many opportunities of seeing; whether you had been making many, and what sketches or copies, for we are quite convinced that you have not been losing your time; whether you have been comparing what you can do with what other artists of about your age and standing in Italy can do, and whether the result is satisfactory; whether there are any among them from whom you can take any useful hints; whether Overbeck or any other

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competent artist is willing to assist you; whether, above all, you saw Power at Florence, and what he thought of your compositions; whether you find in Rome the material advantages you expected in the way of models, &c., and whether you will think it advisable to draw from the antique—the Apollo, Torso, &c.; in short, I cannot too strongly impress upon you that one fact is of more value to us than a volume of reflections. Of course, I would not have you infer that the progress of your mind, your thoughts and feelings, are by any means a matter of indifference to us, but after all they can be only imperfectly shown in occasional letters, and must necessarily exclude information of a more positive and, for the present, of a more important nature. Let me caution you, too, against reading any of the modern German works on æsthetics; they can be only imperfectly understood without a knowledge of the philosophies, of which they form a part, and any advantage you may derive from them will not be at all commensurate to the time and trouble, especially for you who have so much positive knowledge to acquire. If, however, any of your German friends can convey to you in conversation any clear ideas on the subject (and if they have them themselves there is no reason why they should not), well and good, but do not let them impose upon you, as they so often do upon themselves, with words either without any well-defined meaning, or one different from, or even the direct contrary, of the usual one. According to Hegel, for instance, 'das Schöne, ist das *scheinen*' (Schöne from scheinen) 'der *Idee* durch ein sinnliches Medium.' Now every artist knows without Hegel that his idea, or, if he prefers to think so, nature's idea within and through him, appears or manifests itself in the sensuous material, in colours if he be a painter, or stone if he be a sculptor, but this would be worse that trite, it would be intelligible to a plain understanding. *Idee* has a far deeper meaning. If you hear a German flourishing away with the magic word, ask him what he means. He will tell you, perhaps, that it is das Absolute or der objective Geist as distinguished from the Begriff or subjectiver Geist, or rather the indifference of both, and that is neither one nor t'other, but potentially either, or the *an sich*, or *an und für sich*, or rather the *an, für, über sich*; at last after

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much *hin und herreiten* you get some faint glimmering of what is meant; perhaps what some people call the soul in nature, or in still plainer English, nature, or the unknown cause of all we see, not an abstraction but a real entity, impersonal, however, and therefore not a god, acting according to certain laws, unconsciously in external nature (in ihrem Anders'sein) coming to itself—acting consciously in man, but more reflectively in science, more instructively in art. Well, you have caught the *Idee* at last (perhaps!) through its many Proteus-like changes and recognise an old friend after all—scratch your head, and ask whether you are any wiser than before. 'Das scheinen der Idee durch ein sinnliches Material'—in the Madonna of Raphael, for instance—'ist das Schöne.' Why then, says Punch, not equally so in the pork-pie and the mustard-pot, since the *Idee* manifests itself equally in both. The German solves the difficulty by "Sie sind ein practischer Engländer, und haben keinen speculativen Geist." In the meantime, let us hope that nature will use you as her tool to carry out in colours and canvas some of her beautiful ideas, and leave it to the German to find out how the practical Englishman who has not read Hegel's "Æsthetics" has set about it. That you may accomplish this to the utmost extent of your wishes is the sincere wish of, dear Fred, your affectionate father,

FREDC. LEIGHTON.

P.S.—"Werkzeug der Natur" is an idea by no means peculiar to Hegel.

"*Your* birthday—

"Dearest Mamma, may it be a right happy one—one that may serve, and be used, as a pattern to cut out others on. Judging by your accounts, there is one among you who will contribute mirth to your enjoyment—one who takes as many shapes as Proteus, and is always the most welcome of guests; his name is *Bettering*. In this world confident expectation is a greater blessing, almost, than fruition. I too, if my directions have been followed (as I confidingly hope), shall have appeared to you on the great day *as good as gold.*

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"How grieved I was, dearest Mother, to hear that I had given so much pain to the kindest of hearts! My excuse, such as it was, you got in my last letter, which reached probably the day after you posted your epistle to me; I was sincerely sorry; I had not, I must confess, any idea of anxious suspense on your part, as you were not in expectation of any *particular* news; I shall in future try to be more deserving of your solicitude; this time, you see, I am punctual.

"Health Report. Taking all in all, tol. sat., owing, no doubt, to the unusually magnificent weather which we have had since I arrived here; rheumatism, average; colds, not more than usual; eyes? . . . hum . . . might be better; I suppose macaroni 'al burro' are not unwholesome—I and Gamba and several others eat it nearly every day.

"I now turn to your letter. Little Gussy an authoress! dear child, it gives one unfeigned pleasure to hear of her successful *début*. I have myself had no opportunity of judging of her talent for writing, but feel convinced that with her warm heart, impressionable soul, sterling understanding, and quick powers of observation, whatever she writes will please a healthy taste. She has my very best wishes. And yet, what slight cloud was that, I felt pass over my pleasure, casting (I could not help it) an undefined shadow on my heart? Did not I feel startled at being so palpably reminded that the *child* Gussy no longer exists? Did I not seem to feel, disagreeably, that the bridge was cut down behind us, that the last tie was broken that, in Gussy's person, still linked us to childhood, the buoyantly confiding age, the irresponsible age? Did not I become, through her, painfully aware that when I took leave of you, you all sealed with your kiss the first volume of my life, that I am indeed launched into the second, that the rehearsal is indeed over and the curtain drawn up?

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"And do I not feel, even now, a *hypocrite, to know* my path, and yet so often to deviate from it? Write often, dear Mother!

"The hint you gave me about husbanding my time, I shall take to heart; it is a thing of which I myself full well feel the necessity and know the unfailing benefit; but I confess that when I read your quotation from 'Bob,' I felt irresistibly reminded of the question once put to sage and wise courtiers by the facetious monarch 'who never said a foolish thing, and never did a wise one,' viz. Why is a tub of water with a goose in it lighter than one without?

"'God help thee, Southey, and thy readers too!' (Byron).

"Your next question is: Am I comfortably *settled* in Rome? Well, I am happy to say that since the first week or fortnight my prospects have been slowly but steadily brightening, one cloud after another has passed away, and though I do not expect to see the bright sky of fulfilled expectations quite unveiled, yet I look forward to the enjoyment sooner or later of contentment. I wrote my last letter in a tone of considerable disheartenment, which I was indeed labouring under; perhaps it was the triumph of a selfish feeling that made me communicate my woes to you when it was not in your power to mend them; but yet it is such a relief to feel that there are those who are not indifferent to our grievances, who rejoice when *we* rejoice, and weep when *we* weep; and then, too, it seemed to me that perhaps a word from you might throw a new light on my position and give me new reason to be comforted. Meanwhile, altered circumstances have reassured me on some points, and my own reason has pacified me on others which I saw to be irremediable; the prospect of emulation of a peculiar kind, such as I found in Steinle, and generally speaking in the German school (I do not mean the emulation

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of industry which I find amply in Gamba, or in the science of the art which I have lately discovered amongst certain young Frenchmen, but that which affects the animating *spirit* of the art, the *spiritual* taste, the tendency of one's thoughts), I have entirely renounced; the visions that I had (God knows why, for I don't think I ever expected to grasp them) of a time like that of Steinle's sojourn in Rome, when so many master-minds were united together in friendly strife, all inspired by the same spirit, all going hand in hand—have all faded away, and only linger in my mind as a sweet regretted image, like the gentle glow of twilight in the western sky when the cold moon is already in the heavens. But I have, on the other hand, seen reason to believe that this will turn out for my good; that it is proper that I should, once for all, and in all things, accustom myself to the idea that I am, or should be, a *self-dependent* and *self-actuated* being, accountable to myself for good and for evil; that I must therefore learn to build and rely on my own resources, and remember the most important of truths, that if the growth of my art is to be healthy, lasting, fruit-bearing, it must, though fostered from without, be rooted deeply in, and receive its vital sap from the soil of my own mind. Still, I have thought it good to hang up in my studio a work of Cornelius and one or two of Steinle, to animate myself by dwelling constantly on *an idea of excellence* (not *ideal*, I hate such stuff) irrespective of the *specific mode* in which it is manifested; and in this I think I have chosen the *juste milieu*—so far my reason. Yet I do not deny that I every now and then feel longings and regrets that make me feel the truth of those lovely words—

"'We look before and after,
And pine for what is not;
Our sincerest laughter
With *some* pain is fraught.'

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"Among the irremediable disappointments on which I have to put the best face, is that of not seeing Oakes here this winter. From a man of warm feelings, of tastes congenial to my own, of a cultivated and liberal mind, I had hoped to derive much pleasure and especially advantage, and thus to have supplied in some measure the void which must arise (and, alas! remain) in my brain from want of time, want of robuster health, want of eyes. A friendship, too, of mutual seeking is so agreeable a thing. Matters stand so: when I was in Florence I received from him a letter full of a kind and friendly spirit, in which he seized with eagerness at the idea of spending a winter with me in Rome; he was already in Paris, where he was in treaty with a travelling servant in order to continue his journey; he had written to you (did you get the letter?) to know where he was most likely to catch me up; he was anticipating the enjoyment we should find together in Venice, or in Florence, or wherever we should meet; this letter has been waiting for me a month at the post. I arrive in Rome, and look anxiously about for Oakes, who, I suppose, must already have arrived; no Oakes —no news—suspense—despair; at last a letter: he has been recalled from Paris; he is obliged, willy nilly, to stand for his borough (Conservative, Ministerial); he is an M.P.

"Another disappointment, hitherto, is the non-arrival of the Laings; I had promised myself great enjoyment in Isabel's society; the footing on which we stand is such an agreeable one: enough familiarity (for old friendship's sake) to make our intercourse easy—a relaxation; enough restraint to refine it and make it improving; she plays, too. Music! How I yearn for music, which I never hear in the land best adapted to foster it; music, that humanises the soul, that calls forth all that is refined and elevated and glowing and impassioned in one's breast, and without which the very lake of one's heart ('il lago del cuore,' Dante) stagnates and is

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congealed. I express myself extravagantly, but my words flow from my heart.

"Again, the studio, which I at last found, though snug and cheerful, very (let's give the devil his due), is, in its professional capacity, bad beyond description; the light is execrable; I could not dream of painting a picture in it (thank God, I have only taken it till spring), scarcely even a portrait, 'which is absurd,' Euclid, hem. What a list of lucubrations! for goodness' sake, let me look at the gay side of the picture. It has been a great comfort to me all through that all the artists resident here, whom I have spoken to on the subject, felt on first arriving the same kind of disappointment that I did, and that all by degrees have acquired the conviction that, after all, it's the best place in the world for study. I have myself begun to feel what an incalculable advantage it is always to have models at your disposition whenever, and *however*, you want them; I look forward, too, with the greatest delight to the studies that I shall make this summer in the exquisitely beautiful spots to which the artists always take refuge from the heat and malaria of Rome. I long to find myself again face to face with Nature, to follow it, to watch it, and to copy it, closely, faithfully, ingenuously — as Ruskin suggests, 'choosing nothing, and rejecting nothing.' I have come to the conviction that the best way for an historical painter to bring himself home to Nature, in his own branch of the art, is strenuously to study *landscape*, in which he has not had the opportunity, as in his own walk, of being crammed with prejudices, conventional, flat—academical. But I am getting to the end of my paper, and I have as yet said but little to the point; I have not yet answered Papa's question about my sketching, and therefore that I may not seem to be shirking the point, I shall just tell you that amongst the sketches that I have made (mostly architectural) are some by *far the best I ever*

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did.[1] I have also to justify Marryat about not writing; I got his letters the other day with a kind note to say that he had been ill; that to the Princess Doria has availed me nothing, as she is in mourning for her father, Lord Shrewsbury; that to the Prince Massimo has opened to me at once two of the first and most exclusive houses in Rome, those of his two sisters, the Princess Lancelotti and the Duchess del Drago. Enough for to-day. Good-bye, dearest Mother. Very best love to all. Think often of your dutiful and affectionate son,

"FRED LEIGHTON.

"I am ashamed to think of the time I have taken writing this letter; not from want of ideas, not from any great difficulty in expressing them, but from the great difficulty I have in getting at them, controlling them, holding them fast.

"'A saucepan without a handle.
Soup without a spoon.'

"VIA DI PORTA PINCIANA, N. 8."

"ROMA, VIA DI PORTA PINCIANA, N.V.
(*Postmark, Jan.* 5, 1853.)

"DEAR PAPA,—When I received, the other day, your kind and most interesting letter, and felt the appropriateness of your admonitions—felt, too, how foolish it is for me, who am ignorance personified (in certain matters, at least) to waste *my* time in speculations on subjects beyond my grasp, and to exhaust *your* patience by twaddling them out to you, whilst your own penetrating and comprehensive mind takes, in preference, a practical view of the subject—a question suddenly presented itself to me: Bless my soul! what will he say to the epistle I have just sent off? For, as you, by this time,

[1] "The Well-Head" (see List of Illustrations), drawn during Leighton's visit to Venice, and described in "Pebbles," more than justifies this opinion, for it may be questioned whether any other drawing he ever made of the kind is as perfectly beautiful.

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know yourself, it is, though perhaps less groggy than the last, still insufficient in point of practical purport; a *messed-up* dish, not a joint. I hasten, if possible, to make 'amende honorable' by communicating to you in language as concise as possible whatever information you either express or hint a desire to have.

"One word only, a farewell one, on the subject of my *ci-devant* digressions; no, *three* words; I must say in my own justification. 1st. That when I sat down to write, it was always with an idea of telling all (or nearly), and all in detail, too, from which I was prevented by invariably getting to the end of my paper, my time, and my eyes (as it would try them to cross) before I had accomplished my object; 2nd. That I have been discursive with an idea of entertaining for a time the suffering members of the family; 3rd. That all my abstract drawl, though it in some cases abutted in tenets that I had at different times heard you let fall, was *altogether* my own; indeed it was, perhaps, the consciousness of the instinctive *self-suggestedness* of such thoughts that made me turn round on myself and take an objective view of ditto. A philosopher is very like a dog trying to catch his own tail.

"Now to business. You speak of my eyes; I cannot conceal from you that they are worse than they were at Frankfurt, but I do not know whether I can say that they are *getting gradually* worse; everybody takes some time in getting *acclimatisé* to Rome; my sufferings may perhaps be ascribed to that. I intend for some months to give up the nude in the evening. Your advice about gathering information from the conversation of men of cultivated mind I would most gladly follow, but, alas, I only know *two* really well-informed people here, and one is an old man I hardly ever see. There is no fear of my drawing my compositions too small, for (I shall tell you why presently) I am drawing *none at all*, and probably shall draw none for a considerable time;

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but close and minute study of Nature in its details is, as I now see more plainly than ever, of paramount importance. I come to another point which it is difficult to touch with conciseness: have I made any progress? Perhaps I am not entitled to answer positively in the affirmative till I shall have painted some portrait or picture better than anything I have yet produced; this I have not yet had an opportunity of doing; but if, from superlative confidence, having fallen to a more beseeming diffidence, if having improved and chastened my taste, if having become more anxiously aware of the extent of my task and more deeply humbled by those who have fulfilled it, may be called progress, then I can answer: Yes, I have made a step.

"I was deeply impressed with the glorious works of art I saw in Venice and Florence, and was particularly struck with the exquisitely *elaborate* finish of most of the leading works by *whatever* master; the highest possible finish combined with the greatest possible breadth and grandeur of disposition in the principal masses; art with the old masters was full of love, refined, utterly sterling. I had got during my journey through the Tyrol into a frame of mind that rendered me particularly accessible to such impressions; I had been dwelling with unwearied admiration on the exquisite grace and beauty of the details, as it were, of Nature; every little flower of the field had become to me a new source of delight; the very blades of grass appeared to me in a new light. You will easily understand that, under the influence of such feelings, I felt the greatest possible reluctance to *sketch* in the hasty manner in which one does when travelling; I shunned the idea of approaching Nature in a manner which seemed to me disrespectful, and the consequence was that until I got to Verona I did not touch a pencil. In Venice and Florence, however, I made several drawings, some of which are most highly finished, and afforded me,

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STUDY OF HEAD FOR "CIMABUE'S MADONNA," 1853

Erroneously supposed to be the Portrait of Lord Leighton

Leighton House Collection

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whilst I was occupied on them, that most desirable kind of contentment, the consciousness of endeavour. Of course I was obliged to conquer to a certain extent my aversion to anything but finished works, and accordingly I made a considerable number of *sketches* 'proprement dits.' With regard to composing, however, I still feel the same paralysing diffidence, I cannot make up my mind to draw compositions like those I have hitherto produced, but, at the same time, I feel that I am as yet incapable of drawing any in the manner I should wish, and as I see no prospect of such a desirable state of things till I have spent a summer in the mountains and drawn landscape, men and animals for several months, it is very unlikely that I shall put my hand to anything original till next winter; then I shall pour myself out with a vengeance. When I left Frankfurt I asked Steinle whether I should compose the first winter; he answered: '*Oh, wenn Sie mögen.*' He foresaw how it would be. It gives me great comfort to feel that I am quietly settled to study for some years in one place, and that I am able to make plans for the future without having to reckon on removals and changes. Meanwhile, this winter I take models, I have been studying the anatomy of the horse, I shall draw at the Vatican from Raphael and Michael Angelo (*perhaps*, too, from the antique), &c. &c. A digression, whilst I think of it: I think that the pains in my eyes are in some measure nervous, for mentioning them invariably brings them on, in broad daylight. About the little emulation I find here I have spoken in my last letter. The general tone here (of course with some exceptions) is one of public toadying mediocrity. There is here one young Frenchman, remarkable for correctness but coldly scientific (only in his art), without that warmth and spontaneity which give such a peculiar charm to works of genius. Overbeck was endlessly courteous and praised me very highly, talked of the artists

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in Rome acquiring in us 'einen ächten Zuwachs' ('a real addition'), but the half century between our respective ages and his pietistical manner make me sure that we shall derive but little advantage from him; I neither expected nor wished to find a second Steinle.

"As for Powers, though he was very polite to me in his own sort of way, I am pretty certain that he had entirely forgotten, nor did he ask me to show him anything. You may console yourself on that score—a sculptor, especially one who can do little but busts (however pre-eminently good they may be, and *his* are), can very seldom judge well of pictures. Gibson, the great sculptor, whom I know very well, and who shows me great kindness by-the-bye, has about as little judgment in painting as a man well can. That I *do* find models here, and many other material advantages, I told you in the letter that you lately received.

"I have now, dear Papa, answered all your questions; it only remains for me to thank you for your poignant and admirably practical remarks on the German philosophers—remarks, I assure you, which have quite answered their purpose; both they and the kind wishes you have expressed concerning my future advancement shall not have been thrown away on your grateful and affectionate son,

"FRED LEIGHTON."

(*Postmark, Jan.* 5, '53.)

"DEAREST MAMMA,—To your appendix an appendix. Paper and time force me to laconism.

"My personal discomforts, for which you show such kind sympathy, are, I am happy to say, now only very slight; the only thing I suffer annoyance from is my stove, which makes my head ache; with regard, however, to beating a retreat, I must candidly tell you that I see my only chance of coming to anything is studying here steadily for *some*

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three years; the more so that it is by all accounts only at the end of the first year that one feels all the advantages which Rome affords. My plans seem to be these: this winter, studies; next summer, ditto, in the mountains, or wherever it is coolest; next winter, pictures, portraits, compositions; summer after, Paris, see the large Veronese (which was invisible the last time I was there); from Paris to Bath to see all you darlings again, spend two or three weeks in England studying its character under the ciceroneship of Oakes, that thorough Briton, and collecting materials for some large (in meaning if not in size) picture to be painted in Rome during the third winter, and to be my firstling in an English exhibition; I feel that one day my painting will have a strongly national bias. That autumn I should probably return to Rome *viâ* Spain to see the Murillos, &c.

"When you next write to Lady Pollington, pray remember me very kindly to her; her merry face and facetious ways are still before me. Lord Walpole, whom you mention as coming to Rome, and whom I shall know if he does, is indeed, I believe, a very agreeable and clever man. The Henry Walpoles have been very civil to me; Mrs. Walpole told me that if I wrote to you I was to give her best—I think she said, *love*—for that you were a great favourite of hers.

"Here I must absolutely close, though I have plenty more to say. My very best thanks to Papa and you all for the kind presents, but I don't see why you won't allow me the pleasure of giving you anything. As I have written this letter immediately after the other, I cannot promise to write again soon. To yourselves, very best love from your dutiful and affect. FRED LEIGHTON."

The following letters from Steinle are evidently the first Leighton received in Rome from his master. No comment

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on them is necessary. Every line is evidence of the affectionate quality and beauty of the nature that so permanently influenced Leighton's for good.

Translation.] "FRANKFURT AM MAIN,
January 6, 1853.

"MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,—Although I do not know your address, and am uncertain whether this will reach you, yet I can no longer withstand the urging of my heart; I only know that you and Gamba are in Rome, that you have visited Overbeck, as he himself has written me; assuming, however, that you also visit the Café Greco, I will risk that address. Your spirited lines from Venice reached me safely, and I can truly say that since then my thoughts and my good wishes for you and for Gamba have daily accompanied you. A report which has been circulated here, that you, Gamba, and André had been attacked by robbers, made me anxious for a time, and I expected from day to day that you would yourself write me something about this adventure—in vain. Overbeck writes me now that it would give him particular satisfaction to be able to help or serve you in any way during your stay in Rome, and cordially wishes that you and Gamba would give him the opportunity to do so, but unfortunately he knew nothing else about you to tell me. What Schäffer writes me is also so extremely scanty, that for all that concerns you and Rico I am thrown back on my own thoughts and suppositions. That you are both absent from me is unfortunately a painful truth; as to whether the ideal life which from old and dear habit I still live with you, be also true, the future, I hope, may show. I have an idea that you, dear friend, and perhaps also your faithful comrade, already suffer from the artistic fever of Rome, which every one feels in the first year. It is that glorious old Rome, with her wealth, and the multitude of her impressions, which works so

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VIEW OF SUBIACO, NEAR ROME. 1853

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powerfully upon the receptive mind, that it can retain nothing in contradiction, and cannot escape her influence; this period is one of discomfort, because we feel ourselves oppressed; but though it is of the greatest value, and no doubt bears rich fruit, the work of artists of to-day is neither in a position to offer you anything important, nor to deceive you in sight of the old masters; if the multitude of impressions is first gradually assimilated, if everything is assigned its place, if we take a wide survey, and can stride forward freely in pursuit of the goal set before us, then only does that wonderful spirit which hovers over Rome rise up in us strong and inspiring, and then we are able to recognise what we have actually won in the fight with discomfort. Thus, and in similar circumstances, I fancy that my dear friends are in the same case as the bees, which swarm, and toil with all the load they collect, but cannot make honey by perpetual sucking. That is inconvenient and oppressive, but ah! when this time is past, what wealth will they unfold, with what comfort will they look upon the well-filled satchel, how quickly they will recognise that such wealth pays interest for the whole life! But if it is otherwise, dear friend, then laugh at the all-wise Steinle, and resolve finally to free him from such delusions, and to set the matter before his eyes as it really is, and be you assured of one thing, that he always wishes that everything may be good and prosperous for you, that all that you are longing to attain you may attain, and that Almighty God may guard you and Rico from all ill! You can have had no idea with what feelings your friend would read your vigorous, spirited lines from Venice. I received them, on my return, from Gamba, a very dear lad, and could not help being sorry that you, who have become so dear to me, should know absolutely nothing of what distressed your friend. We are men; hear, then, the news. Returning from Switzerland, I heard of the illness of my daughter Anna, in Metz, and I and

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my wife hurried to her, and spent six sorrowful days by the death-bed of my little sixteen-year-old daughter. After the funeral, I came back here, and finished 'The Raising of Jairus' Daughter.' The real pleasure of my art I felt shrink from me day by day in Metz; and now all my pleasure depends upon the beloved art, for happiness is more and more confined within the four walls of my *atelier*. Do not read any complaint in this; I have learnt much sadness, but have also found rich cause to thank God from my heart. What manner of children should we be, if we would not kiss the rod when we are chastised? And now, dear friend, with all my heart a greeting to Rome, and to all who remember me kindly. All friends here send greetings to you and Gamba, including Casella il Professore; Senator Nay is in Rome. I hope with all my heart that you have good news of your dear ones, and remain, always and altogether yours, STEINLE."

Translation.]

"MOST ESTEEMED HERR STEINLE, — When you receive these lines I shall have already been long in the lovely land wherein I lack nothing but your presence; I beg you to accept from me the accompanying translation of the first volume of the works of the Father of English Poetry as a little remembrance; whether it is a good rendering of the great master I cannot judge, as at the moment of writing it has not arrived; but one thing I can answer for: it is the only volume of the only translation of Chaucer into the German language in existence; I only regret that there is also no Italian version; may it serve you as a souvenir of your devoted and grateful pupil, FRED LEIGHTON.

"FRANKFURT A/M."

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Translation.]

"ROME, VIA DELLA PURIFICAZIONE No. 11,
January 11.

"MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,—At last I am able to write you a few words, and (although very late) to send you my very best good wishes and congratulations for the New Year. I am sure that you will be kind enough to forgive my long silence, and will believe me when I tell you that I absolutely could not help it. I hope with all my heart that in the meantime you have been well and strong, and that your beautiful works have progressed in accordance with your wishes. How has the experiment with the new ground turned out? Have you already started on the other cartoon? I, for my part, have experienced the fact that to make plans and to carry them out are two different things; for nothing has come of the pictures which I set myself to paint. I have already told you in Frankfurt, dear Master, how painfully my deficiency pressed upon me, and how clearly I felt that my works lacked a highly genuine finish in the form, an intimate knowledge of nature; this consciousness had so increased when I arrived in Rome that without more ado I determined to employ myself during the whole winter exclusively upon school tasks, and by all means to endeavour to rid my artistic capacity a little of this defect; so now I continually paint study heads, which I try to finish as much as possible, and in which I especially have good modelling in view; that I have achieved this, unfortunately I cannot yet assert, but I derive great enjoyment from the attempt, and hope that my efforts will not remain unrewarded; I shall then next year, if I come to the painting of pictures again, go to work with greater knowledge and clearness, and shall be able, I hope, to clothe my ideas more suitably.

"I have nothing further to report of myself. I hope,

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my dear Friend, to receive a few lines from you, telling me what you are doing, for you know well how deeply interested I am.

"Will you be so kind as to tell Mr. Welsch that my trouble to find the Palazzo Scheiderff was in vain, and I have also unluckily not seen his brother? If I pass through Florence again in spring, I will try my luck once more. And now, adieu, dear Master. Kindest remembrances to your wife and children, and to you the warmest greeting, from your grateful pupil, LEIGHTON."

Translation.]

"FRANKFURT AM MAIN,
March 24, 1853.

"MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,—My desire for news of you and Gamba was certainly great, but I possessed my soul in patience, for I was convinced that it would come at last; you and Rico have given me so many proofs of your love and friendship, that I was able to face with perfect calm and confidence all the numerous and impatient questions for news of you which came to me. Now, however, I see by your welcome lines, to my inward regret, that some restrained anxiety about you is justified, and while on one hand I greatly regret the weakness of your eyes and in a manner suffer with you, yet I have also my consoling argument that the Roman climate, at a better time of year, will certainly be good for your ailment, and that my Leighton can rise up again, that he will not lose courage. But whatever joy I had when you and your noble friends bore such splendid witness of one another, I cannot express myself as very easily satisfied; that you, in your efforts, would stand alone in Rome, I knew well, I am sure you are cut out for it, and it appears to me, even, as if every good heart that rises to a happy independence nowadays, must

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feel his loneliness, I might even say, that it must in order to give skill and power of conviction. The better you get to know Rome, the more you will learn to love her, and much will be freely given, when once the year of struggle is past, that could never be seized by force. How much I have rejoiced over all that you write of your and Rico's studies, how I should like to see them! Cling now to nature, you are quite right, you will not lose the art of composition, for it is not a thing that can be acquired: it is a gift, and one that you and Rico possess. Now, indeed, it always seems to me, when I consider the highest aims of art, and indeed the greatest capacities of man, that there should be a certain equalisation of the various powers, and it strikes me as indispensable, if we are not to become one-sided, that we should by such equalisation balance these various powers so as to achieve a *complete harmony*. Thus, however great a delicacy goose-liver may be, it always indicates a diseased goose, the monstrous enlargement of an organ, &c.; I do not say this by way of blame, and am thinking perhaps too much only of my own feeble powers, but merely as a little warning that it may be well to keep in view. Do not think that it is the Professor asserting himself, I say this only as a matter of experience and because you and Rico lie very close to my heart, and are associated with my own feeling of the sacredness of art. I have, however, no anxiety; you have good and noble natures, and will not lose the tracks of truth. Spare and save your eyes, I hope that you will soon be quite free from this ill, and then — forward! What you write me of the friends is certainly quite correct, and I myself thought no otherwise; Overbeck is the purest and noblest man that I have ever met; moreover a genius—therefore I rejoice that you and Rico know him; he speaks with feeling and judgment of his art. Excuse, dear Leighton, my forgetfulness; I have not thought of the dear and lovely

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present which with your note surprised me so pleasantly on my return—I mean the powerful and rich Chaucer; I find the prologue splendid, rather knotty, but the Germans of that time are still knottier. I thank you heartily. Of myself, I can inform you, that I daily rejoice more over the grey canvas; I have worked two months on my picture of the 'Whitsun-sermon,' and now in three weeks have painted half the picture, and am, even though somewhat exhausted, not altogether discontented with the result. This picture, which grows daily more like a fresco, is getting on fast, but much still remains to be done, and I have the progress of the whole picture in hand. Of the friends here, I can tell you that all speak of you and Gamba with love and sympathy, and that you are kindly remembered by all. Thank Rico cordially for his welcome note; if you and Rico always call me 'master,' a title which abashes me, we shall be friends, and I hope that as I grow old in years, at least I shall remain young in art. Tell Rico that I had a visit from his grandmother, who loves him dearly; with a few lines he would give her extreme pleasure. Now, adio, dear friend; equip yourself with patience and courage, and keep sad thoughts far from you. Greet all friends from me most heartily, also I have to send to you and Gamba warmest greetings from all here, including my wife, Frau Ruth Schlosser, and Casella. Let me hear sometimes how you get on. Always and altogether yours, EDW. STEINLE."

(*Postmark*, *March* 28, 1853.
Received April 6.)

(*On cover*—Mrs. Leighton,
1 Brock Street, Bath, England.)
"ROME, VIA DE PORTA PINCIANA 8.

"DEAREST MAMMA,—If I did not, as was naturally my first impulse, answer your letter directly I received it, it was because Isabel's[1] portrait has of late taken up all the time,

[1] Miss Laing, afterwards Lady Nias.

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or rather eyes, that I can dispose of; this being, however, a *drying* day, I seize the opportunity of making up for lost time. As I have mentioned the portrait, I may as well say *en passant* that I expect it to be a very successful likeness, and as decent a painting as a thing done in so desultory a manner can be expected to be; Gamba admires it very much, and intends to copy some parts. I was much touched at the affectionate sympathy you show for me in my visitation, and am as glad for you as for myself to say that there is a decided improvement in the state of my eyes, so that, although they are by no means *well*, it would hardly be worth while to go to a doctor for a written account of my symptoms; the more so as Dr. Small, who is a man very well thought of, thinks it all depends on the weather, and will go away when fine weather sets in, which God give! Add to this that several people of my acquaintance, *i.e.* Mrs. Sartoris and Mrs. Walpole, who never had anything the matter with their eyes, find them affected now. About two months ago I went to consult Dr. Small, or rather, on calling on him one day he *had me up* professionally, for I felt a delicacy about going myself, as he had told me that he would be very happy to be of service to me *without* any remuneration. Finding that Dr. Small's prescription had done me no perceptible good, I determined at last to go to a homœopathic physician, of whom I heard great things. He was originally the apothecary of Hahneman (do I spell the name rightly?) the father of Homœopathy. Under his hands I certainly improved rapidly; but it so happened that, just as I went to him, the rains, which had lasted without interruption for six weeks, ceased, and we had some days of glorious weather—now, who cured me, Jove or the apothecary? The weather is now as bad again as ever; but though less well, I have not *relapsed* with it. Most days I can paint three or four hours (I don't think I could draw),

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and the other evening I even read half an hour with a lamp without feeling pain; what a pass things have come to that that should be a boast! I confess that the little I do, I do without energy or great enjoyment. I have not yet given my eyes the fair trial of complete rest which, when the Laings go, I shall be able, through your kind promise of a piano and singing lessons, to do for a fortnight or three weeks. My sincere thanks to Papa for his kindness and liberality. I shall begin immediately after the holy week, for until the *forestieri*, of which there are a fabulous number, have gone to their respective summer quarters, neither piano nor masters are in any way come-at-able.

"Having now spoken of my health, I return to your letter, for I find that the only way of writing at all to the point, is to answer sentence for sentence the questions and remarks you ask and make, and in the same order.

"I indeed count myself fortunate in having the acquaintance of Mr. and Mrs. Sartoris; it is a source of the greatest enjoyment to me; they show me the most marked kindness, which I value all the more because it is for my own sake, and not for that of a dinners-demanding letter of introduction. I am never there less than three times a week, and often more; I have dined with them *en famille* four times, and it is only seven weeks since I made their acquaintance. Although I have a good many friends here, it is the only house which it is improving to me to frequent; her conversation is most agreeable to me, not from any knowledge she displays, but from her great refinement of feeling and taste; her husband is an enthusiastic amateur painter. I also meet there a young man of the name of Cartwright, a very old friend of theirs, who seems to me to possess an extraordinary amount of information, a mine which I have already begun to 'exploiter' to my own profit.

"I have made a considerable number of acquaintances,

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and have had more than enough parties, for people have a habit here of receiving once a week, so that, especially towards the end of the season, there never was an evening when I could not have gone somewhere, and often I had two or three places for one night; I used often to stay away from them, till I was afraid of offending people, which one does not wish to do when one experiences kindness from them. Then came a long series of arrears, which I found most monotonously tiring, for I am more lazy about dressing for a party than ever; more than once, when I have gone to my room to go through that hateful operation, I have slipped into bed instead of into my glazed boots; and yet, if I had taken the steps a great many young men do take, I should have gone to twice the number of places. Now all this was very well for this winter, as I could do nothing else on account of my eyes, but next year I shall turn over quite a new leaf; in the first place, give up dancing altogether—it is too fatiguing; and in the next, go nowhere but to my old acquaintances (of this winter, I mean).

"I have lionised Isabel all over Rome, and devoted to her nearly all my afternoons since she came; it is the luckiest thing in the world, her coming here at a time when I am not able to paint; she is going in a few days; you may easily imagine that I have not slept in the afternoons since she has been here.

"Gamba is, as you rightly suggested, far too straitened to go into society; however, he no way requires it, he has good health and untiring industry, and requires no such relaxation. As my paper is coming to an end, I must pass over the rest of your letter more rapidly. I fully feel with you that it is better in many respects that I should not go to Frankfurt, but I confess that when I saw it was out of the question, I felt painfully having to wait another year before seeing you; however, it is for the best. I am

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interested in hearing that you have bought a house in Bath; it looks as if you had at last found an anchor in your own country; is the society of Bath really agreeable? I always hear it spoken of in a jocular tone. What becomes of the Frankfurt house? You won't sell it, will you? Pray remember me most kindly to Kate Chamberlayne, and thank her for giving such an unworthy a corner in her memory.

"And now, dear Mamma, I must close. Pray write very soon, and give me a quantity of news about all your doings; tell me how dear Lina gets on and Gussy's Pegasus."

The preceding letter contains the first mention that I have seen of Leighton's friends, Mr. and Mrs. Sartoris, who were to be so much to him during twenty-five years of his life. He had known them seven weeks when he wrote it, and already Rome had become a happier place. All that most interested him in social intercourse was satisfied in their companionship, and in that of the intimate circle of friends who frequented their house. It soon became a second home, a home doubly welcome, as Leighton felt keenly being separated from his family. Mr. Sartoris was a fairly good amateur artist, and was considered by his friends to be a first-rate critic of painting. To Leighton's reasoning mind, ever prone to analyse and to give expression to the results of his analysis, it must have been inspiringly interesting to discuss art in general and his own in particular with one who had a natural gift for criticism.

Again, music was ever a joy to Leighton, a joy only equalled by that inspired by his own art. Mrs. Sartoris (Adelaide Kemble), imbued with the noble dramatic instincts and traditions of the Kembles, was not only a great singer, but a great musician, and had in all matters a fine taste, bred of true and deep feeling united with keen natural perceptions. In Miss Thackeray's "Preface to a Preface" to

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Mrs. Sartoris' delightful story, "A Week in a French Country House," she quotes the description of one who had known the two sisters, Fanny and Adelaide Kemble, from their youth: "Mrs. Kemble is essentially poetic and dramatic in her nature; Mrs. Sartoris, so much of an artist, musical, with a love for exquisite things and all that belongs to form and colour." (Some of us remember hearing Lord Leighton say that, though Mrs. Sartoris did not paint, she was a true painter in her sense of beauty of composition, in her great feeling for art.) Another old friend, referring to Mrs. Sartoris, with some show of reason deprecated any attempt to record at all that which was unrecordable: "Would you give a dried rose-leaf as a sample of a garden of roses to one who had never seen a rose?" she exclaims, recalling, not without emotion, the golden hours she had spent, the talks she had once enjoyed in the Wasash Pergola. "You have only to speak of things as they are," said a great critic who had known Mrs. Sartoris in her later years. "Use no conventional epithets: those sisters are beyond any banalities of praise." Again, take another verdict: "That fine and original being, so independent and full of tolerance for the young; sympathising even with *misplaced* enthusiasm, entering so vividly into a girl's unformed longings. When I first knew her, she seemed to me to be a sort of revelation; it was some one taking life from an altogether new and different point of view from anything I had ever known before." Such are the descriptions given by those who knew her intimately of the lady who held out so kind a welcoming hand to Leighton when, as a youth of twenty-two, he started for the first time alone on the journey of life. I saw Mrs. Sartoris only two or three times at the house of our mutual friends, Mrs. Nassau Senior and Mrs. Brookfield. It was during the last years of Mrs. Sartoris' life, when illness and sorrow had marked her noble countenance with suffering. A

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friend of mine, however, who was greatly attached to Mrs. Sartoris, would often talk to me of her. My friend had had exceptional opportunities of coming in contact with the most distinguished minds in Europe. She told me she had never met with any personality who naturally, and apparently without effort, so completely dominated all others who were present. However distinguished the guests might be at a dinner, Mrs. Sartoris, she said, was invariably the centre of interest to all present.

. The Sartoris children were another source of delight to Leighton in this home. No greater child-lover ever existed. He writes, moreover, that all social pleasures which he enjoyed during the three years he lived in Rome he owed to these friends.

With life brightened and inspired by their sympathy, and by all the sources of interest and culture which their society included, Leighton began brooding over the work which he meant should embody the best of his attainments so far as they were then developed. Florence and her art had cast a spell on his spirit very early in his existence. He had become especially enamoured of Giotto, the half-Catholic, the half-Greek Giotto. Pheidias had not yet touched him intimately; but his loving, spontaneous appreciation of this Florentine master, whose work in one sense echoes the secret of the noble, serene sense of beauty to be found in that of the Greeks, proves that in very early days Leighton's receptive powers were alive to it. The subject which inspired his first great effort appealed especially to Leighton from more than one point of view. In the historical incident which he chose was evinced the great reverence and appreciation with which the early Florentines regarded art, even when expressed in the archaic form of Cimabue's painting. The fact of his picture of the Madonna causing so much public enthusiasm was in itself a glorification of art; a witness that in the

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integral feelings of these Italians such enthusiasm for art could be excited in all classes of the people. One of the doctrines Leighton most firmly believed, and most often expressed, was that of the necessity of a desire for beauty among the various classes of a nation, poor and rich alike, before art of the best could become current coin.[1] In painting the scene of Cimabue's Madonna being carried in triumph through the streets to the Church of Sta. Maria Novella, Leighton felt he could record not only his own reverence for his vocation, but the fact that all who follow art with love and sincerity find a common ground, whatever the class may be to which they belong. To Steinle, religion and art were as one, and his pupil had so far been inoculated with his master's feeling that, as his friend and brother artist, Mr. Briton Rivière, writes: "Art was to Leighton almost a religion, and his own particular belief almost a creed." As no difference of class should be recognised in church, so neither should any be accentuated between artists, when such are worthy of their calling, a belief which Leighton carried into practice all his life in his relations with his brother artists. He makes Cimabue, the noble, lead by the hand the shepherd boy Giotto, who was destined to outstrip his patron in the race for fame, and to become so great an influence in the history of his country's art. The magnates of the city are represented in Leighton's procession as forming part of it, while Dante, standing in a shadowed corner, is watching it pass.

Again, Leighton was afforded an opportunity, in the accessories of the design, of painting the things which had entranced him in those days when he first fell in love with Italy; the mediæval costumes in the old pictures, the background to the *Città dei Fiori* of hills, spiked with cypresses pointing

[1] See Appendix. Presidential Address delivered by Sir F. Leighton, Bart., P.R.A., at the Art Congress, held at Liverpool, December 3, 1888.

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dark, black-green fingers upwards to the sky, and the beautiful San Miniato crowning one of their summits, the stone pines, the carnations, the *agaves*—all these things that had appealed to his native sense of beauty as such wonderful revelations, when, at the age of ten, he was transported to the sunlit land of art and beauty, after being accustomed to the sights and surroundings of a dingy region in fog-begrimed London.

The subject of Leighton's early *opus magnum* was indeed no bare historical fact to his mind; it was a symbol of everything to which, in his enthusiasm for his calling, he attached the most earnest meaning, and which was also steeped in the radiant glamour cast over his spirit from childhood by the land that inspires all that is most ardent in the æsthetic emotions of an artist.

The subject decided on, in the spring-time of 1853 he began working, as hard as the trouble in his eyes would permit, at the cartoons for the design. His intention of remaining in Italy during the summer was frustrated, partly by the unsatisfactory state of his eyes and health generally, partly by the decision of his family to return to their home in Frankfort for the summer, before finally settling in Bath. This change of plans is first mentioned in a letter to Steinle received February 23, 1853:—

Translation.]

ROME, VIA DI PORTA PINCIANO 8.

DEAR MASTER AND FRIEND,—How gladly I seize the opportunity to answer your delightful letter, and to connect myself again through the post with a man and a time round whom and which so many dear remembrances cling; that I did not do this immediately on receipt of your lines, I hope you have not set down to a possible negligence or to any sort of cooling of my grateful attachment to you, but that you have thought,—something has happened, Leighton has not forgotten me; and so it is; I suffer

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with my eyes. How sorry I am to begin a letter by giving you such news, for you expected only to hear from me of industrious making of progress; therefore exculpation of my silence is my first duty. The disorder of my eyes is not painful; I do not suffer with it; I am only incapacitated. Oh, that I were again in Frankfurt, then I should be well! Otherwise I am fairly well, and am intensely eager to do a great deal—and dare not; I am not altogether incapacitated, only my wings are clipped; I work for two or three hours every day, but as I cannot accomplish all that I desire, the little I can affords me the less pleasure; what, however, particularly damps my ardour is the lack of intellectual stimulus, because for *nearly six weeks* I have not *looked at a book*, for in the evening I simply dare not do *anything*. I have driven myself out into society, till I absolutely prefer going to bed. If I could only compose in my head! but first this was always difficult for my unquiet head, and secondly I have, in consequence of this moral *Sirocco*, been blown upon by such a *svoglia-tezza* that it is quite impossible; it only remains for me to think sadly of my, and I may say to you, most sympathetic friend, of our hopeful expectation, and to vex myself with the recollection of the zeal and joy with which I had commenced to put my plans into execution in Venice and Florence. My optic ailment is partly of the nerves, but principally rheumatic. You can imagine whether it has been improved by four weeks of unbroken wet weather! But enough of these complaints. I will now turn to your letter and answer the points on which you touch. What a refreshment your lines were to me! They are a mirror of your warm, rich soul; I read with unfeigned emotion how sympathetically you still think of your two pupils; you have not been out of our minds for a moment; see how it is in my atelier here: in your portrait you are bodily, in your writings you are spiritually, present with me daily. That I did not write to you immediately on my arrival was certainly wrong of me, for then I had not begun to suffer with my eyes; but my head was in such a maze that I always put off and thought, I will wait till I hear if he has received my first lines, quite forgetting that you did not know my address in Rome. I am sure you will forgive me. What you imagined about my impressions, agrees at the first blush with

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the facts, but as regards the "gathered honey" it has unfortunately turned out quite differently. I feel as if blighted, and until I have the full use of my eyes it will not be otherwise. Of Rico I will say nothing, for he will write himself either to-day or to-morrow; I can only tell you that so far we have travelled through Italy in perfect concord and friendship; but there is one thing that he will not tell you himself, he is indefatigably industrious, and has made marked progress in both drawing and painting. One word about my own development. Since I left Frankfurt, my observations on nature and art, in all beyond what is technical, have produced in me a curious shyness, a peculiar and uncomfortable distrust of myself. When on my journey I saw Nature unfold before my eyes in her teeming summer glory, and saw how each flower is like a miracle on her richly worked garment, when I saw how golden threads wound everywhere through the whole fabric of beauty, then it seemed to me that the artist could not without sacrilege pass over the least thing that is sealed with the love of the Creator; when, later on, I noticed in Venice and Florence with what love and truth the great Masters had rendered the smallest, then my feelings arose; I knew only too well that I, until I should have drawn a multitude of studies, could not possibly complete a composition in the sense that I should wish, and otherwise I would not; and the consequence of this knowledge is that I have not attempted a stroke of composition, and I often anxiously ask myself whether I could; thus far it has worked to paralyse me, but on the other hand it has led me to draw some very complete studies which would certainly not displease you, dear Master. Finally, I touch upon a point which, on account of its painfulness, I would gladly pass over. I heard in Florence from André of your severe loss, and my first impulse was to write to you to express my sympathy; but when I set about it, I found it so infinitely difficult to say anything suitable without irritating your wound, that in the end I forbore. Your consolation you draw from a higher source than human friendship.

We have visited Overbeck several times, and have found him a dear and estimable old man, but naturally the difference of age and of aims is too great between us for him to supply

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your place with us; besides, I do not wish that he should in any way supplant Steinle in my memory or affection.

Flatz and Rhoden have welcomed us both most cordially; your name is a charm with them; as regards their art, both are *thoroughly able*, but unfortunately such *literal copyists* of Overbeck's style that absolutely no difference is perceptible; consequently they are quite insipid to me, for I consider a real independence indispensably necessary in an artist. From all three I send you most cordial greetings.

Much as I could still tell you, my dear friend, I must hasten to a close on account of my eyes. I beg you not to repay my silence in kind, but when you have a moment, put a few lines on paper for the encouragement of your distant pupil. I long also to know how your works prosper, particularly the large one on the grey canvas with the light from above.

Accept the assurance of the unalterable, devoted attachment of your grateful pupil, FRED LEIGHTON.

It is not impossible that I might come to Frankfurt for a short time this summer.

A Monsieur Frederic Leighton,
Frankfort a/M. Poste Restante. BATH, *May* 15, 1853.

MY BELOVED SON,—I have hardly the courage to tell you how intense is our joy at the prospect of meeting you, so much sooner than we had hoped, knowing that our pleasure is obtained, or will be, at the expense of a grievous disappointment to your long cherished and quite reasonable hopes. Your father was quite depressed the whole evening after the receipt of your last letter. I am sure I need not tell you how willingly I would relinquish my expected happiness to promote yours. I shall write but a short letter, as we hope to be in Frankfort soon after this reaches its destination. Surely I told you in my last epistle we mean to spend the summer at home, for the last time to bear that name, alas! I fear I shall never, in England, feel as I do in Germany when tolerably well. The climate makes it impossible for me to feel that springiness of spirit so nearly

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allied to youthful feelings which I have often enjoyed at Frankfort and for no particular reason. It was in the air, but never notice these observations in your father's presence. He is sufficiently troubled at the thoughts of depriving me of my beloved house and garden, which, after all, is done by my own desire. I have just been reading an extract from a letter to Miss Pakenham from Mrs. Maquay, partly at that lady's request, that we might know the agreeable impression you made on her and your acquaintances at Rome. I will not gratify your vanity by repeating words of praise that have sunk deep into my mother's heart; "for the matter of that," I think your father and sisters are equally pleased at the tribute to your attractive qualities.

I will no farther fatigue your eyes as we hope so soon to embrace you. We fervently hope your eyes will be obedient to the treatment, which shall enable you to return to Rome for the winter. You cannot doubt that your father desires as much as you that you may be in a fit state to return.

God bless you, my dearest, all unite in this wish, if possible, more than the others.—Your tenderly attached Mother,

A. LEIGHTON.

Leighton went for medical treatment to Bad Gleisweiler, bei Landau, and writes to Steinle from there on July 25, 1853:—

Translation.]

HONOURED AND DEAR FRIEND,—What can you think of me for leaving you so long without news of me! It certainly did not occur through forgetfulness, but because I always deferred in the hope of being able to announce some marked improvement in my condition, but that is still impossible, although my general health (particularly in respect of the hardening against cold-catching) is much stronger, though unfortunately the improvement in my eyes is not great; this, however, requires time, and especially patience. I shall be here another fortnight, then my medical treatment will proceed in a so-called after-cure

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(Nachkur); I shall be dieted, take many baths, work in moderation—ouf! But I will conform to it all willingly, if only I may very soon return to my adored Italy. How I cherish the beloved image in my heart! how it comforts me! how many idle hours it beautifies for me! how mightily it draws me! The remembrance of the beautiful time spent there will be riches to me throughout all my life; whatever may later befall me, however darkly the sky may cloud above me, there will remain on the horizon of the past the beautiful golden stripe, glowing, indelible, it will smile on me like the soft blush of even. In the meantime, I impatiently await the moment when I shall see you again, my dear friend, and when I shall be permitted to set before your eyes the work which we have already discussed together; I shall seek so to deal with my affairs that you shall not be ashamed of your grateful and devoted pupil,

FRED LEIGHTON.

P.S.—I beg to be remembered most kindly to your wife, and to all my friends.

(*On envelope*—A. Madame Leighton,
50 Frankfurt a/M.)

BAD GLEISWEILER, BEI LANDAU.
(*Postmark, July* 30, 1853.)

I had the first quarter last year; so that I shall still be where I started; however, I can say nothing more myself to Papa, since he has given me to understand that his reason is want of confidence in me, for, having rejected the obstacle which I myself suggested—that he could not afford it—he leaves no other reason possible. I confess I do not feel much flattered that this feeling should have so penetrated him as to make him fall back from me on an occasion so momentous as the painting of my first exhibiting picture, a moment critical in my career, and on the immense importance of which nobody can, at other times, dwell with more disheartening eloquence than himself; how, he says, do I know that your picture will succeed? Is it this doubt that makes him throw obstacles in my way? Nobody is better persuaded than myself of the kindness of Papa's heart,

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and of the sincerity of his desire for my welfare, but he does not seem in any way to realise the importance of the occasion. Now, if I, like so many other young men, had gone into the army, he would not—for what father does?—have hesitated for a moment to provide me with my complete outfit as required by the rules of the regiment, for he would have felt that I could not canter about on parade without a coat; but now that I am girding myself for a far greater struggle, now that I am about, single-handed, to face the bitter weapons of public criticism, does he withhold the sword with which he might arm me, for fear I should waste my blows on the butterflies that pass me as I march into the field? At two and twenty I am still in his eyes a schoolboy whose great aim is to squeeze as much "tin out of the governor" as he can by any ingenuity contrive.

Will you remember me most kindly to my uncle, aunt, and cousins, and take for all yourselves the best love of your dutiful and affectionate son, FRED LEIGHTON.

Leighton took the cartoons for his picture of Cimabue's Madonna to Frankfort to discuss the designs with Steinle and obtain from him his criticism and advice. In the autumn of 1853, the home in Frankfort was finally given up, and the family returned to Bath. Leighton, on his journey back to Rome, stopped some weeks at Florence, to steep himself afresh in her mediæval art, and to gather fresh material for the details of his picture. During this visit, he drew the group of figures painted *al fresco* by Taddeo Gaddi on the walls of the Capella Spagniola of Sta. Maria Novella, which included the portraits painted from life of Cimabue and Giotto. In this portrait Leighton found the costume for the hero of his picture. He also repeated the dress in painting the cartoon for Cimabue's portrait executed in mosaic in the Victoria and Albert Museum. The pencil sketch (see List of Illustrations) is wonderful as a drawing, considering the conditions under which it was made. It was secured for the Leighton House

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Collection, and in the preface for the catalogue it is described (see Appendix). While at Florence he wrote the following letter:—

FLORENCE, 386 VIA DEL FASSO,
November 13, 1853.

[MY VERY DEAR MAMMA],—How could you for one instant suppose that I could suspect you of coldness towards me? I was quite distressed that you should have entertained such an idea, and had I followed my first impulse should have written at once to tell you so; but, as it so easily happens when one is newly arrived in a strange place, first one thing and then another made me defer writing, till at last I made up my mind to stay at home all this morning, and not to get up till the letter should be finished; I am, however, still several days within my month. With regard to my health, I made no especial mention of it, probably because, as I have a treatment before me when I get to Rome, I attached little importance to my feelings in this state of interim; however, as you mention it, I am happy to say that my faceache makes its appearance decidedly less often than it did in Frankfurt, and that my eyes seem to me, if anything, better since I have got to Italy. One thing is certain, and that is that my spirits are very much improved since I have got back to the dear land of my predilection; I felt it as soon as ever I arrived in Venice; I felt a heavy cloud roll away from over me, the sun burst forth and shone on my path, and a thousand little springs, stifled and half-forgotten fountains of youth and joyousness, gurgled up in my bosom and buoyed up my heart, and my heart bathed in them and was glad—happy Fred! that he has such sources of joy and happiness! Unlucky Fred! for he will never be able to live but where the heavens always smile—and where he can economise on umbrellas!

I have had many happy hours within the last three weeks, but I think that the happiest time of all was the afternoon of our descent on to Florence from the mountains of the Romagna; even the morning of that day was very enjoyable, for although the sky was murky and cross, and it rained as far as you could

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see, yet I knew that that very evening, in that very coach, I should be rattling along the streets of dear, dear Florence, and that bore me up, and I made light of the rain, and whistled out of tune in order to take off the wind, who, in spite of his fine voice, has certainly no ear for music. Then, too, we had a most amusing coachman, who did nothing but tell stories and crack jokes the whole time. One episode is worth transcribing: "Seen to-day's paper, sir?" (turning sharply round). "Well, no" (says I); "anything in it?" "Ah!" (says he), "very interesting correspondence from the moon." The article seems to have been as follows: "Our correspondent in the moon tells us of rather a discreditable affair which has just taken place in a high quarter. It seems that the other night St. Peter, having spent the evening with a few friends, by whom he was entertained with the distinguished hospitality which his high position entitled him to expect, left them in such a state of excitement and, in short, intoxication, that he lost his way, and was missing at his post till ten o'clock the next morning. Unfortunately, too, he had taken the keys with him. About two o'clock in the morning a batch of souls, with passports for heaven, came up to the gates and requested admittance, but finding all knocking in vain, they were obliged to spend the night behind a cloud in a very exposed situation, which was made doubly disagreeable by their having put on in anticipation the very slight costume habitually worn in the abode of eternal happiness; several severe colds were caught." "But all this," he added (mysteriously producing a key from his waistcoat pocket), "does not affect me—letters, you know, despatches." I have myself subsequently consulted the papers in question, and find that St. Peter, in the confusion of his ideas, had taken up his seat at the other Sublime Porte, and had inadvertently let a lot more Russians into the Danubian Principalities. So the papers say. However, I confess that I rather question the whole affair.

I close with the old, yet ever new refrain. Pray, write very soon! if at once, to Florence, Poste Restante; if not, to Rome, Poste Restante.—With very best love to all, I remain, dearest Mamma, your dutiful and affectionate son,

FRED LEIGHTON.

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Portraits of Cimabue, Giotto, Simone Memmi, and Taddeo Gaddi, from Fresco in Capella Spagnola, by Taddeo Gaddi. Santa Maria Novella, Florence, 1853.

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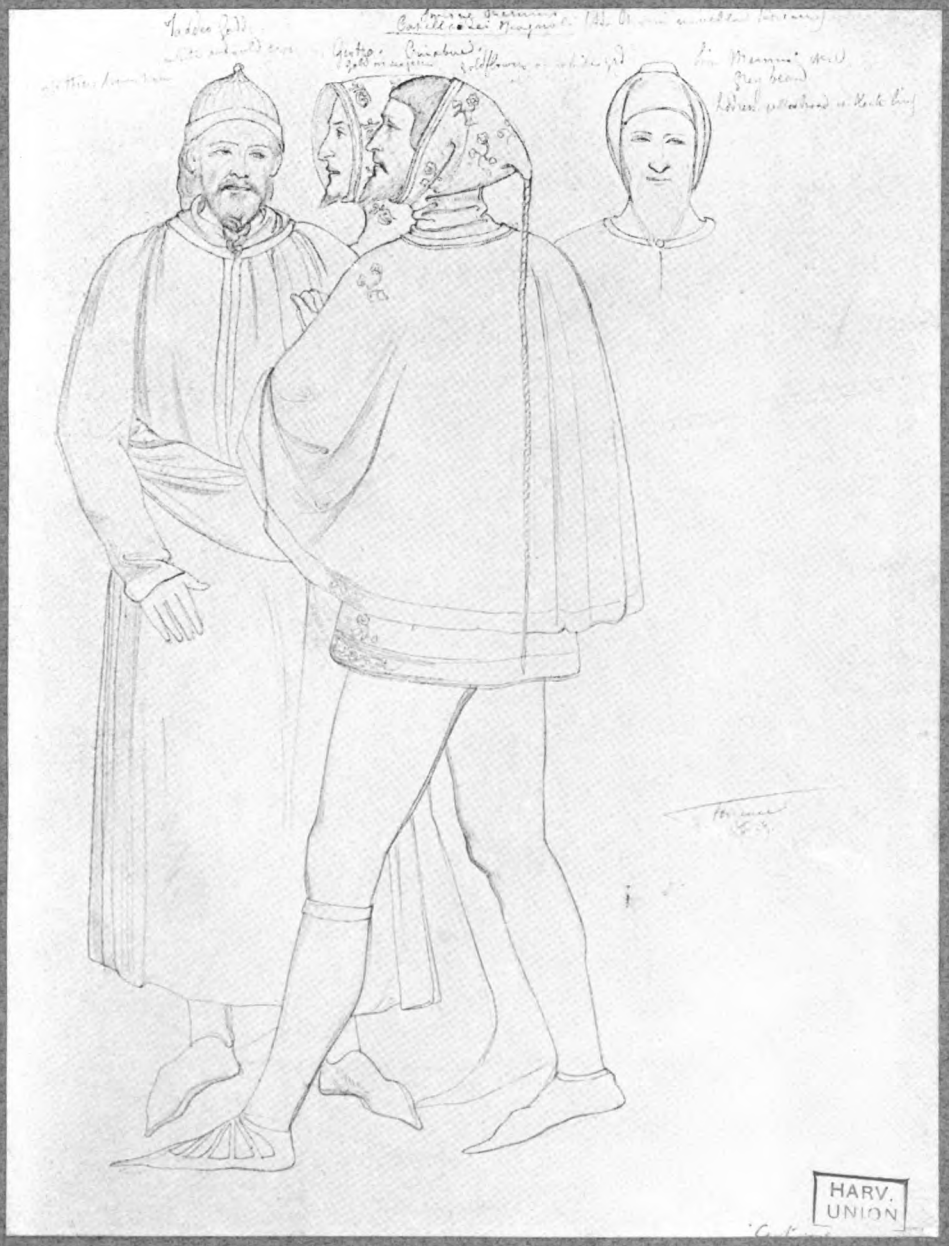

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BATH, *August* 13, 1854.

MY DEAREST FREDDY,—We are delighted to know you are out of Rome, for it is possible to have too much of a good thing; and much as you delight in "seeing the streets flooded with light and glittering under a metallic sky" (how beautiful it must be!), the pure air of the country, a less fierce heat, and a total change of scene, will, I trust, make a new man of you. How long a holiday shall you take, and did you mean that you are staying with the Sartoris family as a visitor? under all circumstances you will be a great deal with them, and as for the happiness you would so affectionately share with me, I would not, if I could, deprive you of a morsel of it; you are enjoying such unusual social advantages that it is a solace to me to know that you are capable of appreciating them. Thank God, you have no taste for what so many men of your age call pleasure, and that in spite of your sociable disposition, you always show good taste in the choice of your companions. I wish we could have a little of your society. The —— are still familiar and dear friends, but their minds are so different, so conventional, that many sides of your sisters' minds are closed, even to them.

The next letter from Leighton to his mother was written after he returned to Rome:—

(*On cover*—Mrs. Leighton,
No. 9 Circus, Bath, England.)

ROME, VIA FELICE 123,
January 19, 1854.
(*On cover—Arrived Jan.* 6, '54.)

DEAREST MAMMA,—When I received your long expected letter, which, by-the-bye, took sixteen days reaching me, I was just winding myself up to write and tell you that I was sorely afraid some letter of yours must have been lost; I need hardly tell you that I was relieved of a considerable anxiety when I found that all was right, and that your letter, not mine, had been detained in that most slovenly of all institutions, the Roman post.

And now that I have taken up my pen, what a quantity I have to make up for in the way of congratulations, and greetings, and good wishes relative to days often and felicitously to

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recur! what jolly birthdays loom in the imagination, what Christmas Eves and Christmas Days, and old years going out and new ones coming, with a punctuality never known to fail! Alas! that I cannot send you some outward and visible sign of my inward sympathies and hearty yearnings; here would be a fine opportunity of enumerating an extensive catalogue of blessings which I sincerely wish to see showered down upon you, but that they can all be returned in one compendious, all-embracing word—Health! I therefore laconically but heartily wish you all *that*, positive or relative; and this leads me to *mine*. Well, let me confess it (unromantic as it undoubtedly is); I feel there is no shirking the avowal that, stamping all things down into an average, and squinting at little annoyances, I—must I say it?—*am about as happy as the day is long:* may my happiness reflect a little of its light on your days, dearest and best of mothers! I have begun my report of health by an average of my spirits; I think there is more *à propos* in this than one might at first sight imagine. I proceed to the other details which differ widely from your probable expectations; you ask me whether I leech myself with conscientious regularity. Now I don't leech myself at all! My reason for abstaining when I first came was that I feared so strong a measure till my spectacles should arrive that I might therewithal screen and protect my exhausted blinkers. It is only the other day that the said barnacles arrived, and as I have meanwhile gone on working day after day without great inconvenience to my eyes, I really think I might do myself more harm than good by drawing blood, the more so that I am by no means a person of full habit, that I could spare much of that article.

On turning to your letter, I find the next point you touch is my music. I did indeed try my voice at the Hodnett's as you anticipated, but unfortunately I never by any chance had anything like a decent note in my voice during the whole time that I was in Florence; indeed at the very best of times it is the merest "fil de voix" that I have, which, however, would not prevent my cultivating it for my own private enjoyment, but for a circumstance which will astound you perhaps, but is nevertheless a great fact—to wit, that I can't afford it! The expenses of

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my pictures are far too considerable to allow of it this winter; next winter I hope to make up for lost time and still to be able to chirp some little ditty when I once more skim by the paternal nest. A piano I have, such a hurdy-gurdy! I fear, alas! I am an inveterate blockhead; I daily lament that you did not *drub* music into me when I was a child; I should then have broken my fingers in time; my youngsters shall most assuredly learn it with a stick in their minds' eye. As we were just talking of the ——s, I must mention that I founded my opinion less on what they say than on what *I* think and see; they could not either of them be happy if they could not have their bonnets and dresses from the most fashionable *modiste*, turn out drag of their own, and in every way be "the thing"; that they like me, I know, but I believe they would not have me if they liked me twice as much; I am not exactly poor, I admit, but I seem something like it in Florence, where it is the custom for young men to drive to the Cascine in elegant broughams or phaetons, to find their riding-horses at the round piazza, to prance and amble round the ladies, and then to drive home again in the style they went. But let me speak of more important things; you will be pleased to hear that my compositions have been highly approved of by all those whose opinion has weight with me. Cornelius said, the first time he saw them, "Ich sehe Sie sind weiter als alle Engländer ausgenommen *Dyce;*" that is a great compliment from such a man. I have made one alteration in my plans, of which Papa, I think, will not disapprove; I found, on more accurate calculation, that, in order to paint my Cimabue of such a size as to be admissible to the London Exhibition, the figures would be far smaller than my eyes would tolerate; I have therefore reversed the order of things, and am painting it on a large scale for the great Exhibition in Paris (spring, '55), in which all nations are to be represented, and where size is rather a recommendation than an obstacle. My "Romeo" I shall send to London in the same year; it will be a foot each way smaller than Lady Cowley's portrait; thus I also have the advantage of giving the Florentine picture a size more commensurate to the art-historical importance of the event it represents. With regard to the sale of it, I hug myself with no vain delusions. I paint it for a name; I could not have a

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finer field than is offered by the great International Exhibition in question. I must come to a close, for I expect a model immediately, and do not wish to miss to-morrow morning's post. *La suite au prochain numéro.*

Pray write soon, dearest mother, and tell me all I long to know about yourselves, the house, the furniture, your friends, and your dinner-party; meanwhile, having first largely helped yourself, pass up to all the dear ones very best love and kisses from your dutiful and affectionate boy, FRED LEIGHTON.

(*On cover*—Mrs. Leighton,
9 Circus, Bath, England.)

ROME, VIA FELICE 123,
March 22, 1854.
(*Received March* 31.)

DEAREST MAMMA,—As I see no chance of finding time to write to you in the ordinary course of things by merely waiting for it, I lay down my brush for this afternoon, and "set to" regularly pen in hand to answer your last, dated the fifth (let us be business-like), but which did not reach me till a few days ago. According to the egotistical practice which you have wished me to adopt, I begin with an account of myself: I am very much at a loss to tell you anything of my eyes that shall convey to you a correct idea of their state; one thing is certain, which is that their weakness bears no regular proportion to the work done; sometimes when I do little or nothing my eyes feel uncomfortable, and at others, when I do a great deal, I suffer nothing. For instance, yesterday, having a great deal of work cut out for the day, I worked eleven hours, with barely half an hour's respite at twelve, and, *pour comble de méfaits*, I did what I rarely venture on—I read at night; and yet I feel little or no inconvenience. The fact is, my eyes are the humble servants of my head, which is particularly sensitive; at the same time I hesitate to adopt leeches (unless, of course, Papa adheres to his opinion), because I don't feel as if I were over-troubled with blood; what do you think? My *otherwise* health is, thank God, very decent. I am not a robust man, but I jog on very comfortably, and feel very jolly, and I am sure I have a good many reasons to be so. About the hours I spend inactive, I don't feel that so severely as I did last winter, by any means; in the first place, I work till five or so (from

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seven or eight in the morning), then, you know, I dine at six, which I make rather a long job; then, in the evening, instead of tiring my eyes as I did last winter with dancing, *which* I have totally forsworn (there are more "whiches" in my letter than in the whole tea-party on the Blocksberg in "Faust"), I spend nearly all my time at the house of my dear friends, the Sartoris, where, I assure you, to pass to another point in your letter, I neglect no opportunity to cultivate my poor unlettered mind. It is indeed my *only* opportunity, for to study, alas, I have neither time, health, nor eyes, and the hopes to which you allude, and which I myself once entertained, must, I fear, be given up. The worst feature in my mental organisation is my utter want of memory for certain things, a deficiency of which I am daily and painfully reminded by the mention in my presence of books which I have read and enjoyed, and which I have *utterly* forgotten. My only consolation I find in the hope that I shall be able to devote myself with double energy to the art "proprement dit," and in the reflection that hardly any of the modern artists (alas, what a standard!), that have possessed extensive knowledge and varied accomplishments, have had them as a super-addition to the gift of art, but *at the expense* of their properly pictorial faculties; to every man is dealt a certain amount of *calibre*—in one man's brain it breaks out in a cauliflower of variegated bumps, in another's it flows into one channel and irrigates one mental tree, and "sends forth fruit in due season"—hem! Thus, whilst *I* paint, *others* shall know all about it; *I* shall be an artist, let *them* be connoisseurs. What did poor Haydon (for I *have* read the book) get by his mordant gift of satire and his devouring thirst for ink? He embittered old enemies, made new ones, estranged his friends, encouraged the fierce irascibility of his own temperament, allowed himself to cuddle the phantoms of undeserved neglect which always haunted him, distorted his own perceptions, and cut his throat! Without that pernicious gift, Haydon would not have written, the Academy would have hung his pictures as they deserved, for his early works were full of promise, they would have stood by him in the hour of need; had everything that he saw and heard not fallen in distorted images on the troubled mirror of his mind, he would, no doubt, have produced better works. Haydon might have been

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a happy man! With regard to the practical lesson to be drawn by myself, this painful book undoubtedly shows in a strong light the absurdity of *always* painting large pictures—a practice in which, I assure you, I have not the remotest idea of indulging. To one thing, however, which you observe, dear Mamma, I must beg to take exception, as involving a very important question: you say Haydon persisted in following the historic style, to the exclusion of pictures of a saleable size; now this would only avail as precedent against historical art on the supposition that that walk necessarily implies colossal proportions, than which idea (though Haydon seems to have entertained it) nothing can be more false. Is it necessary to mention Raphael's "Vision of Ezekiel," "Madonna della Seggiola," or a thousand other pictures, by him and others, which utterly confute any such notion? But even were it so, we must also not overlook the fact that the unsaleability of Haydon's pictures had its cause as much in their quality as in their quantity, and I will hold up to you, in contrast to his sad story, the case of Mr. Watts, who gives a sketch of the artistical character at the end of the autobiography, and who has as many orders for *fresco* as he can execute for a considerable number of years.

BATH, *April 17th.*

MY VERY DEAR FRED,—I have left a longer interval than usual between this letter and my last, for your convenience and my advantage; that is to say, that by arriving close on the time for your writing to me, the contents of this sheet, or anything in it needing comment, may not have escaped your memory till no longer wanted, for, with the best possible wish to be contented with the epistles for which I look forward so anxiously, I cannot help feeling a little disappointed when you do not answer inquiries. I do not wish to be unreasonable, my darling, in my demands on your time, but I cannot bear that your letters should be mere unavoidable monthly reports, and not what mine are to you, that is, in intention; though I make every allowance for natural infirmity. Could we but have foreseen your weakness of sight, I should have felt a great inclination to thrash you into exercising your memory more than you did, though I am not at all sure that the result would have been satisfactory; and with respect to music, I am convinced you would not

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STUDY OF HEAD OF WOMAN AT WINDOW IN "CIMABUE'S MADONNA"

Leighton House Collection

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have made a satisfactory return for any knowledge acquired by dint of birch, but—if it were not useless—I would enlarge upon the imprudence of having neglected your father's admonitions at a more recent period to store your memory; remember it for the sake of your own young people when you are the venerable papa of an obstreperous youth like yourself. I think upon the whole it is satisfactory that the uneasiness in your eyes depends on your general health. Papa thinks the sensation you describe when drinking must be nervous, and connected with the narrow swallow you inherit from me, a peculiarity which has shown itself in four generations. We do not feel so certain as it would be comfortable to do that the climate of Rome is the one best suited to a nervous person; but of course you will seek a healthy change of place as soon as the heat makes it desirable. I must remind you of the unpleasant fact that your constitution very much resembles mine; remember what I have come to, and do not trifle with yourself; do not say to yourself: What a bore Mamma is! I am constantly thinking of my precious absent son, and long, as only a mother can, to see you; when I look at your picture, I feel quite wretched sometimes that I cannot, though you seem alive before me, stroke your cheek and lean my head on your chest. The other day we were startled by the appearance in the drawing-room of Andrew, Lizzy, and the girls; and the first greeting over, "That's my saucy Fred," burst out of your aunt's mouth; "dear fellow, what a likeness;" and Lina was equally admired, and we all agreed in deploring Gussy's absence from the wall. I wish I could see your studies, for I suppose you have a great many for your great undertaking. Models are probably cheaper than in Germany—are you conscious of improvement? This seems an odd question, but it is suggested by the fact that while Gussy practises most diligently, she seldom seems conscious of the improvement I perceive distinctly. Do you see Cornelius from time to time, and gain anything from him? You never mention if you have any friends amongst the artists distinguished in any way.

ROME, *April* 29, 1854.

I have of late, since the underpainting of my large picture (at which I worked like a horse) given myself rest and recreation in the way of several picnics in the *Campagna* under the auspices of

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Mesdames Sartoris and Kemble. We are a most jovial crew; the following are the *dramatis personæ:* first, the two above-mentioned ladies; then Mr. Lyons, the English diplomatist here (whom your friend probably meant); he is not ambassador, nor is he in any way supposed to represent the English people here, he is only a sort of negotiator; however, a most charming man he assuredly is, funny, dry, jolly, imperturbably good-tempered; then Mr. Ampère, a French savant, a genial, witty, amusing old gentleman as ever was; then Browning, the poet, a never-failing fountain of quaint stories and funny sayings; next Harriet Hosmer, a little American sculptress of great talent, the queerest, best-natured little chap possible; another girl, nothing particular, and your humble servant who, except when art is touched, plays the part of humble listener, in which capacity he makes amends for the vehemence with which he starts up when certain subjects are touched which relate to his own trade; in other things, silence, alas! becomes him, ignorant as he is, and having clean forgotten all he ever knew![1] I shall not be able to leave Rome more than a month in the summer, as the work which I have carved out for myself makes it utterly impossible. You must know, however, that the hot months (July and August) are not the dangerous ones, but September, when the rains set in. During that month I shall give myself a complete rest from work, and shall go to the baths of Lucca, the healthiest spot in Italy, where I shall enjoy cool air, country scenery, and, better than all, the society of the Sartoris, who are going to spend the summer there; meanwhile, I shall take what precautions I can; I shall live

[1] This modest attitude Leighton took as listener reminds me of the last time he saw Browning. One afternoon in the autumn of 1888, we were sitting with Leighton and Browning in the Kensington studio. Browning showed us photographs of the Palazzo Rezzonico which he had lately given to his son. The subject turned to a discussion on Byron and Shelley. Often as I had heard Browning talk well, I never heard him converse so well as he did on that afternoon. It was no monologue. It was real conversation, and of the kind that inspires others to do also their best; but Leighton never uttered, till—when, after an hour or so, we rose to leave—he exclaimed, "Oh, don't! *do* go on," and we had to sit down again. When at last the good thing came to an end, Leighton conducted us downstairs to his door, where we parted. Browning waved a farewell from across the road, where he stood for a moment in front of the little cottages, while Leighton stood in the porch-way of his house. The next day Browning started on his last journey to Italy—to die in the Palazzo Rezzonico.

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as the Italians do, getting up early, and sleeping in the middle of the day, and shall resume flannel, if you do not advise the contrary, as I see reason to believe that it is a great preservative against fever. As for the general climate of Rome, I don't give it much consideration, as there is not the least probability of my ever *residing* here; I think there is not a worse place for a rising artist to set up his abode in than Rome, on account of the want of emulation as compared, for instance, to a place like Paris, where there are hundreds of clever men, all hard at work, and where an artist is always exposed to comparisons. It is impossible for me to give you any decisive answer about my progress, for you know I have been busy all the winter drawing studies; I shall see when I come to the picture itself what steps I have made forwards; I reckon on its being the best thing I shall have done, I can say no more. I believe Sartoris, whose judgment in all the arts is excellent, considers me the most promising young man in Rome; but that does not mean much—we shall see!

Of my daily life and occupations, I have little or nothing to say, as they are monotonous to a degree; parties, of course, have ceased, and I am just about to leave p.p.c.'s everywhere, as I don't mean to go into the world at all next year. I don't remember whether I told you that some little time back Mrs. Sartoris gave some tableaux and charades in which your humble servant co-operated; the whole thing was, I believe, very successful. The greatest treat I have had lately has been hearing Mrs. Kemble read on different occasions Julius Cæsar, Hamlet, and part of Midsummer Night's Dream; I need not tell you how delighted I was.

(*Cover*—Mrs. Leighton,
Circus, Bath, England.)

ROME, *May* 25, 1854.
(*Received June* 5.)

VERY DEAREST MAMMA,—Your letter (which I received the day before yesterday, and should have answered the next day but for an engagement I had made to go into the country) caused me great pain; if you have known me hitherto for a dutiful and loving son, believe that in this case nothing has been further from me than the least umbrage at the advice and suggestions that you always offer me with kindness and delicacy, and that I am much distressed at the idea of having in any way aggravated the discomforts

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which an English winter make you suffer; let me rather attribute, and beg yourself to refer, to the depressed state of your spirits any misconstruction you have laid upon a letter in which, if there was any constraint, it arose only from a desire to answer satisfactorily and systematically such questions as you asked me; I will endeavour in future to present my report in a more ornamental form. The delay, too, of my last letter arose from a misconception on my part of your expectations, for I was waiting and eagerly waiting for *your* answer to intervene, and, considering the irregularity of Roman posts, you can hardly have a day on which you particularly expect to receive news of me. Let me hope, dear Mamma, that on these points, as on the others that I am going to touch, you will be able in future to think more cheerfully, in spite of the distorting medium of British fogs. I fear from the tone of alarm I detect in your letter that I (myself perhaps, at the time, under the influence of the *scirocco*) must have conveyed to you an idea of greater ill-health than I labour under: my eyes, certainly, are not strong, so that I avoid using them at nights, and I am, as I ever was, incorrigibly bed-loving, but this is "the whole front" of my ailments; meanwhile I work all day with little or no annoyance. I am of good cheer and contented, and altogether more free from rheumatism than I have been for a long time; that, thus deprived of the means of reading, such little information as I ever had should have effectually made its escape from a noddle that never had the capacity of fixing itself on any *one* thing at a time, is deplorable, but not to be wondered at; let us hope for a better day. Nor is spending the hot months of the summer here in Rome so dreadful a thing as it appears to your tender anxiety; with proper precautions and a regular life I shall no doubt go through it as well as so many of my friends that have tried the experiment; the more so that the worst part of the summer is in September and early October, at which period I shall be enjoying the particularly cool and healthy air of Bagni di Lucca. How could you be surprised, dear Mamma, at my having begun the pictures? did I not tell you the size of them? do you not know the quantity of figures in the composition? do you not know that it will be considered a piece of extraordinary rapidity if I finished them in time for

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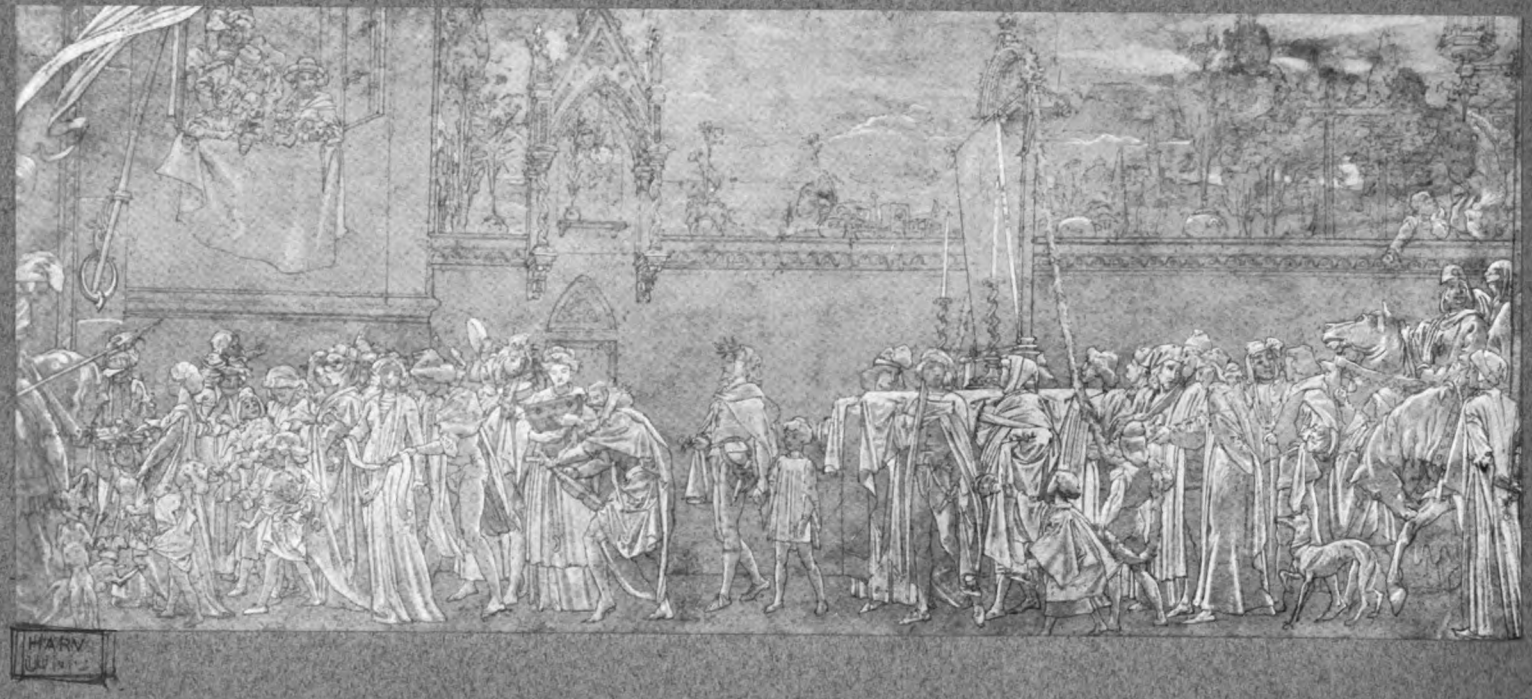

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ORIGINAL SKETCH OF COMPLETE DESIGN FOR "CIMABUE'S MADONNA"

Drawn in 1883 Engraved by Henry Scott Tuke, Esq., R.A.

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ORIGINAL SKETCH OF COMPLETE DESIGN FOR "CIMABUE'S MADONNA"

Drawn in 1853 Leighton House Collection

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the Exhibitions, *i.e.* by the beginning of next February? You perceive the necessity of my staying here, willy nilly. The Sartoris seem to you too prominent a motive in my desire to stay; alas! and again alas! they are off to Lucca in a few days, and I shall be left alone. Judge whether I am eager to get off, and whether anything but necessity of the most urgent kind will keep me here, for I am warmly attached to both, and her I dearly love. Be quite at ease about the amount of advice I can get here, I do not lack that if I want it; but as it is, the compositions were so completely sifted by Steinle before I left Frankfurt, that I have nothing left but the material execution, in which you know every artist must fumble about for himself. Cornelius *is* very kind and amiable to me, has been to see me twice, and speaks well of me behind my back; he told Mrs. Kemble (Fanny) that there was not another man in England that could paint such a picture as my "Cimabue" threatens to be, and the same was unhesitatingly asserted by Browning, the poet, who is also a connoisseur. Such details as these from my mouth savour of intolerable vanity; they are not meant so, and I give you them simply because I think they will fall pleasantly on the ear of the mother of the daubster. To show you the *revers de la médaille* about advice from influential men, I will just tell you that I received the other day from Cornelius some advice which was diametrically opposed to that of Steinle, *arrangez vous!* Gamba and I are still capital friends, and he is making great progress, which is the well-earned fruit of his talent and assiduity.

Now, dear Mamma, you see how letters come to be dry; by the time you have shaken off the responsibility of question answering, and begin to breathe a little, you have got to the end of time and paper, and have no margin left for a little dessert; the fact is, *your* only chance is this: next time you write, ask me no questions, and then I'll devote my epistle to telling you a most thrilling story which, though it far surpasses in strangeness the common run of works of fiction, is *perfectly and literally true*, as I have it almost from headquarters; them's your prospects! —Meanwhile, with very best love to all, I remain, your affectionate and dutiful son, FRED LEIGHTON.

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Translation.] ROME, VIA FELICE 123,
May 29, 1854.

DEAREST FRIEND,—Delightful as it always is to me to receive any news of you, yet your last letter, along with pleasure, caused me some pain, for I could not help fearing that my long silence had annoyed you a little; if this should be indeed the case I must express my extreme regret, and beg you to believe that my gratitude and love can only cease when my memory ceases; how could it possibly be otherwise?

You paint me a very melancholy picture of the situation in Frankfurt; it is certainly a most unpleasant state of things, all this quarrelling and dissension! When I, at this distance, think of such a regular hermit-like way of going on, I feel quite disgusted; it is fortunate that you, dear Friend, have in the ecstasy of creation a resource that can never fail you. But how comes it that Hommel and Hendschel, formerly your enthusiastic pupils, have now cooled down? That is very incomprehensible; they do not know their own interests. I congratulate you most heartily on the completion of your large picture, which I am very sorry not to have seen finished, and I am especially glad to hear what you tell me about the shield-bearer, for that breathes to me of *industrious study of nature!* Believe me, that you, the mature master, who still consents to play the part of a student, will not be without your reward.

What you have written me about my work has put me into a most terrible dilemma, a dilemma which I am still very deep in. It is a presumption that I should set up *my* ideas, and a disobedience that I should take the advice of other friends, against your judgment; but I have gone so carefully into this manner of representation, that I beg you, dear Friend, to reconsider the matter, and see whether I am not right. These are my reasons: it seems to me that the action in my pictures, if ostensibly a triumph of the artist, yet, at the same time, as an historical event, is just as much the consecration of a Madonna, for which reason I (as you know) have placed the masterpiece which is being carried upon a small decorated altar; that such a solemn event probably took place on a church festival (as was the case with the consecration of the Chapel) may very well be assumed; would not such a festival in the *thirteenth century* be

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important enough to justify the presence of the bishop? But much more important than this question of historical probability, appears to me the consideration that the conception of a bishop is only made tangible to the general mass of spectators by certain symbolic articles of apparel, which are in some degree inseparable from it; a bishop's presence in the procession is most probable. Why should I not put him there? Amongst others, this opinion was also held by Cornelius, to whom, as an experienced Catholic, I naturally applied at the outset, and who told me candidly that he would leave it. I hope you will not accuse me of being too stiffnecked; in other respects I am certainly docile.

Since I last wrote to you I have been fairly industrious on an average. I have now under-painted "Romeo and Juliet" in grey (grau untermalt), made both the colour sketches, and have now fairly got into the over-painting, or rather second under-painting, of "Cimabue"; but I have not been always within four walls; on the contrary I have profited by the beautiful spring weather, and have often gone out into the divine Campagna with a party of dear friends, male and female, and I need not tell you that we have enjoyed it. I wish with all my heart you could be with us, my dear Master. Rico, the ever-industrious, for he does twice as much as I, sends you warm greetings. I must now close. I wish I could tell rather than write to you how you are loved and esteemed by your devoted pupil, FRED LEIGHTON.

Please remember me most kindly to your wife.

Translation.]

FRANKFURT AM MAIN,
August 6, 1854.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,—You have heaped coals of fire upon my head, for I have not answered your last dear note, brought me by André, and now I have received by Miss Farquhar the lovely study of Vincenzo's head, which you so kindly wish to present to me. I am almost dumfounded to find that you could believe I was angry with you because you have not written me for so long, and that you believe that the indignation had been ignored in my last note. That, dear friend, was a complete delusion, for there is nothing to which I am more partial than to artists' letters, and nothing to which I am

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more insensible than to such flattering praise as you lavish upon me, while I know only too well how unfortunately little I have deserved it. In earnest, dear friend, call me no more master, but rather regard me as your true and sincere friend, who only out of friendship for you and love of art, far removed from despicable dissimulation, faithfully shares with you his opinions and experience, and never regards them as the pronouncements of an oracle. I know very well what a difference there is between the description of a work of art and the sight of it; the first, at best, only gives one side, one part, whilst seeing places before our eyes the whole soul of the artist, from all sides, and then much is made mutually clear which in the former case appeared either not understood or misunderstood. Miss Farquhar could not tell me enough about you and your work, and greatly kindled my curiosity and desire to be in your *atelier* for once; I was only sorry that she had nothing to tell me about Gamba; indeed, on the whole, she knew nothing about him. If I am to express my thoughts of the very beautiful head of Vincenzo, it seems to me that Leighton ought to guard against striving for excessive fineness, for works of art can only be produced by quite the contrary method. A certain roughness must bring out fineness, but if everything is fine, nothing remains fine, &c. But believe, though this head half displeases me, especially on account of these theories, I think it beautiful and masterly in drawing, and am consequently proud to possess it, as I am of all that I have from your hand. I thank you a thousand times for this fresh proof of your friendship. About this place, let me be silent; you are right to say that art is my refuge, and that I find in it my compensation for much that goes ill here and everywhere; I must also not allow this asylum to be profaned by the trifles of the very human things that surround us in this world.

Greet from me Rome, Gamba, Cornelius, and all the friends who remember me; and to yourself, dear friend, heartfelt greetings from your true and unchanging friend, EDW. STEINLE.

Before leaving Rome Leighton received the following characteristic letter from Mr. Cartwright, one of his truest life-long friends:—

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"VINCENZO, THE PRETTIEST AND WICKEDEST BOY IN ROME." 1854

Leighton House Collection

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HARV. UNION

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CARLSBAD, *July* 11, 1854.

MY DEAR LEIGHTON,—You will be astonished to see a letter from me. I can assure you that I have often thought of you, and meant to indite you an epistle in the hope of eliciting a reply full of Roman tale from you, and lately, when through Papeleu I heard of your great canvass labors, my yearning got a new twinge which at last has been pinched into expression by the start at Pollock's resuscitation. I had heard of his death in Paris and had mourned his fate most sincerely, when the first man whom I met tramping health out of the hot water of Carlsbad was Pollock himself. He is himself again every inch of him; indeed a most wonderful recovery; and, after deep and volorous potations of hot water, we take long walks in the hills. He goes from here to Marienbad and Prague, and means to be back in Rome by the end of October. And I also mean to return there. Like a true drunkard, I can't forswear my bottle, and I must have another pull at it. We shall be there, I hope, in the beginning of October, and I hope, my dear Leighton, that you will not grudge me the pleasure of letting me have a few lines, so that I may know whether you will be there in the winter and what are the changes in Rome since my time. Are the Sartorises to be there next winter, and where are they now? Pray answer me this, as I particularly wish to know where they are. I have heard that there were such crowds of strangers at Rome last winter that quarters were not to be had; and for this reason I wish to be there early. Do you happen to know what is the price of the floors in the house on the Pincio which was built by Byström the sculptor. Next to the Trinità, immediately after the sculptor's studio, there is a small house inhabited when I was last in Rome by some French officers (at least a sentinel was at the door) and years ago by Mrs. Sartoris. Pollock tells me it is now to be let. Would you be kind enough to give me any information you can about it. It is a house I have often coveted on account of the view. I beg your pardon for my coolness; I hope you will bear kindly with it; if I can do anything for you in Paris, command me: but anyhow pray write to me, if only a few lines, for in my heart I wish to have some news about you and old Rome. The other day I saw at the Louvre our old friend the very questionable *Vittoria Colonna* which was at Minardis. It was for Exhibition there in the Gallerie

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d'Apollon: what the picture is I cannot pretend to pronounce, but I do not like it: it is a picture in which I have no confidence. I think that if not a made picture, it is at all events a tame one. This year there was no Salon as it has been put off till next year's great Exhibition. Robert Fleury has sold a picture to the Luxembourg which is not so good as his former ones; but the man who I think is the most *marked* one of the day is Conture. Excuse my scrap, and pray take pity on my longing and write me, were it only *a line*. I should be grievously disappointed were you to refuse me the pleasure. I shall be *here till the 7th August;* until the *25th August*, after that date letters will find me Frankfurt Poste Restante; and after that in Paris Poste Restante. If you write here, put Carlsbad —Böhmen—and in a corner, *Austria*. And now farewell; with a real . . . I am longing for a letter. The kindest regards to my Caffé Greco and other friends.—Yours most sincerely,

W. C. CARTWRIGHT.[1]

After his stay at the Bagni di Lucca, in the summer of 1854, Leighton went to Frankfort, Venice, and to Florence, returning to Rome in October.

In the following letter to Steinle are sentences it might be well to print in finest gold, for the benefit of students who try to run before they walk, who aim at the freedom and glorious inevitability of a Velasquez touch without taking the pains to equip themselves worthily to enter the lists with the giants; not realising that skipping over the underpinning, necessary in creating any work of art, must result in the shakiest of edifices. The sentence refers to the criticism in Steinle's letter of August 6, 1854, on the drawing of "Vincenzo" (called by Leighton "the prettiest and wickedest boy in Rome") which Leighton had sent him.

[1] Another old friend of Leighton's, Mr. Hamilton Aïdé, writes: "My journal 1854–55–56 contains frequent notices of our excursions and long days spent on the Campagna, and on the hill-sides near the Bagni di Lucca, where we took out food for mind and will as well as for the body, and sketched while one of our party read aloud—and also of many Tableaux at Rome, devised by him (Leighton) to suit the colouring, character, and grace of certain noble ladies."

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Translation.]

ROME, VIA FELICE 123,
October 22, 1854.

As I am making a short pause to-day in my work, I cannot employ it better than in writing a letter to you, my very dear Friend. It was a very great comfort to me to see by your last lines that you had not construed my former long silence as a cooling of my friendship and gratitude, and I therefore hope that you will also this time meet me with the same forbearance. You will certainly be interested to hear, my dear Friend, that both my pictures are by this time fairly forward, and I expect to finish them within three months. How much I wish that you could see them here, and that I could put in the finishing touches under your supervision! I would give you an account of my work, but, bless me, what is there to *tell* about my picture, except that it has given me a fearful amount of trouble, and that in the end one perceives how circumstantially one has gone to work on the whole matter; the "Cimabue" goes to London and the "Romeo" to Paris. While I am speaking of my works, I take this opportunity to touch gratefully upon your kind remarks about the study head of Vincenzo, and to inform you, however, that my opinion of it takes rather more the form of a question than that of an objection. I have often considered the question of the self-guidance of an artist who is left to his own devices, and it has often struck me how many wander in evil by-paths through an unorganised, may I say *unprogressive*, development of their gifts; and now it seems to me that most of them are wrecked because they maturely study *the object to be attained*, while the *means* are not considered which should lead to such results. For example, a young man sees a Raphael, a Titian, a Rembrandt, all in their latest manner, and hears people say: See how broad, how full, how round, how masterly! And the student naturally conceives the wish that he also might produce broad and masterly works, and *so far* he is right; but from that point he goes aside. He goes home and *strives* and *strains* after masterly breadth; he succeeds (apparently), and he is lost. The soap-bubble is quickly blown; he rejoices in its gay colours; it flies up and breaks in the air. And the cause is simple; the true, genuine mastership is not an *acquired quality*

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but an *organised result*. As with art itself, so is it also with the individual artist. If we cast an eye over the progress of art-history, we see how the full, conscious, free, has developed itself out of the meagre, timorous, scrupulous, dry. Similarly if we compare the first efforts of the individual with his last, we perceive the same thing: place M. Angelo's "Pinta" beside the decorations of the Sixtine, one of Raphael's works at Perugia beside the "Stanzen," Rembrandt's "Leçon d'anatomie" beside the "Nightwatch," and it will be evident in the most striking manner that not one of these men had risen by means of his talent to full breadth in his youth, or had been in any way studious to do so, but on the contrary that they have attained mastery by natural growth. In order, therefore, to reach the same altitude, the young artist must proceed in the same manner as his exemplars, and must endeavour so to direct his studies that he, according to his gifts, may achieve a similar result. He who would fill his threshing-floor must not *glean*, but rather he must *sow* that he may richly harvest; he who would have rare fruits all his life must plant and cherish the tree; even so should the young artist seek to plant a tree the normal fruit of which is called "artistic perfection." You will easily understand how by the application of these maxims my preliminary works go forward rather *timorously*. Entire conscientiousness is now the chief thing to me. I *am laying* the foundation on which I hope to rely firmly later on; I am amassing capital and am not yet in enjoyment of the interest. "How many objections to a couple of words?" you will laughingly remark; dear Friend, I must feel myself indeed well equipped before I permit myself to oppose anything against your judgment.

Of Gamba I will say nothing, for he is going to enclose a few lines in this.

I have made a trip to Florence this summer, and again thoroughly enjoyed the art-treasures. I think I have spoken to you of the wall-paintings by Giotto which were discovered two years ago in Santa Croce; one of them, which represents the death of St. Francis, is the literal prototype of the celebrated fresco by Ghirlandajo (on the same subject) in the Sta. Trinita, and I really prefer it.

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Time, eyes, paper fail me, and I must close. I hope that, if you write to me again, you will tell me exactly what you are doing.—Meantime, dear Master, accept the heartfelt greeting of your grateful pupil, FRED LEIGHTON.

Please remember me most kindly to your wife and to all my friends.

Leighton's eye trouble having become a constant anxiety and hindrance to him, he resolved to consult Graefe, the great German oculist. From Florence, on his return journey, he writes his impressions of Berlin to Steinle. In this letter he repeats again the sense of happiness which he always experienced in Italy.

Translation.]

FLORENCE, 386 VIA DEL POSSO,
November 13.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND AND MASTER,—At last I am able to write to you. In the hurry and bustle of travelling, and even in the short sojourns that I have made here and there, it has been impossible for me to sit quietly down and compose a letter. Even to my parents I have written this morning for the first time since I left Vienna. But you will readily believe that during this time I have often travelled in thought to Frankfurt in loving remembrance of you, my dear Friend.

Strange things have happened to me since I saw you. I had not even reached Berlin when I was informed by a "jebildeten" (cultivated) Prussian that Graefe, on whose account exclusively I was travelling to the "geistreichen" (clever) capital, had gone away for an indefinite period; imagine my dismay! Luckily on my arrival I found an old friend who was acquainted with the family of Geheimerath von Graefe, and who found out through them that Graefe must arrive at the Golden Lamb (Leopoldostadt) in Vienna on such and such a day. I met him, and had a consultation at which he examined my eyes with the ophthalmoscope, and told me to be of good cheer, my trouble was certainly obstinate but in no way dangerous, and I might hope

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for a complete cure. He prescribed me a course for Rome, which consists principally of local blood-letting and wearing spectacles, and will be very tedious; but I will gladly conform to anything in order to get my eyes back again. One thing is certain, since I have been in Italy they have been quite markedly better, which I attribute for the most part to the diminution of my hypochondria. Yes, since I have been in Italy I have become a new man; I breathe, my breast throbs higher; heavy clouds have rolled away from me; the sun shines again on my path, and my heart is once more full of youth and love of life; if only you were also here, dear Friend!

But I must tell you something about my German travels, and I will begin with Berlin. There is certainly something special about that town. At the first glance it is somewhat imposing, and the prodigious quantity of new buildings, which evidently aim at architecture, gives (one may hold one's own opinion as to the taste of the buildings) the appearance of great artistic activity and of a widespread taste for art; but I have since found reason to regard this apparent love of art as something feigned or forced. One gets quite sick of *education* in Berlin; would you believe that now *every girl* has to pass an *examination as governess?*[1] Kaulbach understands the Berliners well; in Raeginski's house a study of a Roman piper hangs in great honour, which he has purchased from the *great master* on account of a doggerel verse which is written on it in large letters, and runs thus:—

"Upon my travels in Italy,
This little boy I found, but he,
Although my brush may his form repeat,
Remains to my sorrow incomplete."[2]

—W. KAULBACH.

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[1] It appears that Leighton had been misinformed as to "every girl" having to pass such an examination.

[2] In Italien auf meiner Wanderschaft
Hab' ich dies Büblein aufgerafft
Hab's mit dem Pinsel so hingeschrieben
Ist mir leider unvollendet geblieben.

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Divine! eh? I knew a counterpart in the Belgian art-world. When I visited Gallait in Brussels some years ago, before the door stood a ragged, most picturesque Hungarian rat-catcher, who asked me if an artist did not live there. Recently I saw my Slav again, with a violin under his arm, in a window, very finely lithographed, I believe even an "artistes contemporains"; in the corner was "Louis Gallait pinx"; underneath, "Art et Liberté"! Thus do pictures originate!

In Berlin everything is valued extrinsically. One sees that most strikingly in the new Museum. When it is finished, it will be, in proportion to the means of the town in which it stands, the most splendid that I know; moreover, it cannot be denied (unsuitable as a three-quarters Greek building may be on the banks of the Spree) that much in the architecture is even very beautiful. But what is the good of it all? With the exception of some Egyptian antiquities, in all these lavishly gilded and painted rooms there are only *plaster casts!* Yes, and, I must not forget it, the great tea-service of Kaulbach. A wretched thing, made, moreover, with superfluous productiveness; simple allegory carried out without any fine sense of form, with utter denial of all individuality, and painted—well, of that one would rather say *nothing;* and yet "Kaulbach has the Hellenic art," &c. &c., and all the rest that is in the papers. One would like to exclaim with Cassius: "Has it come to this, ye gods!"

Unfortunately I cannot praise the Cornelian things in the *old* Museum much either. I must confess they displeased me greatly; when I consider them from a distance in their connection with the building, I find them disproportioned; in a long, very simple colonnade, built on a large scale, I require of a fresco painting that it shall show in form and colour large, quiet, plastic masses; instead of that I see here a gay, unquiet, confused *fricassée* of thought and allegory that makes one dizzy; ideas in such profusion that nothing remains with the spectator; he goes away without having received anything; nor is the mental impression plastic. If, however, one goes nearer to see the execution, again one finds nothing pleasing—a constrained, unlovely drawing—positions that could only be attained by complete breaking on the wheel—a general appearance as if the

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figures had no bones, but muscles made of brick instead. The colour is not much better than Kaulbach's. The end-piece on the right, an allegorical representation of the death of man (or something of the kind), gives the most ordinary and at the same time most awkward sudden impression that I have yet seen. Cornelius may look at the Vatican in Rome and see if he can find anything like it there. Altogether the once certainly great artist seems to have somewhat deteriorated; the Cartoons at the Campo Santo are not by a long way so good as the design (which I find charming in parts); they are here and there, which greatly surprised me, disgracefully *out of drawing;* and then the theatrical attitudes, conventional clothes, &c. &c. In the Museum itself there are few pictures of the first rank, but so much the more beautiful are those by masters of the second rank. What a Lippi! what a Basaiti! what a Cos Rosetti! I was entranced; that is art, character, form, colour, all in beautiful harmony. The "Daughter of Titian" does not deserve its celebrity; it is weak and dull.

But my paper is exhausted, as are also my eyes; I will therefore defer the rest to another letter, and only mention that in Vienna Kuppelwiesser, Führich, and Roesner received me like a son of the house, and all sent hearty greetings to you. Do write to me very soon, dear Friend, and keep in kind remembrance your grateful, devoted pupil, FRED LEIGHTON.

My address is, Poste Restante, Rome.

Please remember me most kindly to your wife, and generally to all friends.

When tracing the ever-swaying ebb and flow in the tides of joy and sorrow in a life, we come to times which seem to accumulate in their days the whole strength of feeling and vitality of which a nature is capable; prominent summits that rise triumphant out of the troublous waves, up to which the past existence has seemed to climb, and the memory of which retains a dominating influence in the descent of the future.

"I—h'm—must I say it?—am just as happy as the day is

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long." So wrote Leighton to his mother when at the age of twenty-three he was spending his days in and about Rome—that wonderful Rome with her world of ghosts, her solemn eventful past skimmed over and made faint by her actual sunlit present. To Leighton that sunlit present became vividly, excitingly alive. Fountains of joy were springing up in the artist-nature, catching as they sprang golden rays from all that is most beautiful in youth's dominions. Leighton writes to Steinle (July 25, 1853): "The remembrance of the beautiful time spent there (Rome) will be riches to me throughout my life; whatever may later befall me, however darkly the sky may cloud over me, there will remain on the horizon of the past the beautiful golden stripe, glowing, indelible; it will smile on me like the soft blush of even."

When, in the late autumn of 1852, he first arrived in Rome, he had just stepped from the position of being one in a family to that of being an independent unit; and, though accompanied by his brother artist, Count Gamba, he felt greatly the loss of what he had left behind—the inspiring companionship of Steinle, compared to which nothing in Rome was worthy to count as an art influence. Obliged to work in a small, inconvenient studio, the only one obtainable—expected friends, whose society he valued, failing him—he felt the want of so much that he could hardly enjoy what he had. In those first days (as we gather from his letters) the Eternal City cast no fresh glamour over his spirit.

Spring came, and the tune changed with the entrancement of Persephone's release in the balmy warmth of the South. The spring air twinkles with sunshine, and the fruit-trees are again alive with gay blossom, of fluttering petal, frail as the soft moth wing; the villa gardens are again bedecked with grand, more solid petalled flowers—brilliant-hued camellias—and later,—the noble magnolia's ivory white goblets; while the ground is carpeted with violets and varied-hued anemones.

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All over the wild spaces of the Campagna spring up grasses and lovely unchequered growth, spreading a green and golden fur, bristling in the bright light for miles and miles under a cloudless sky away to the faint blue line of mountains on the horizon. On one summit—golden in the sunlight—the old town of Subiaco is poised; on nearer slopes—summer haunts of the ancient Roman world, Tivoli, Frascati, Albano: the wastes of budding herbage between checked only here and there by some spectre of old days, some skeleton of a broken archway, some remnant of a ruined wall.

It was on these strange wilds of the Roman Campagna that the life-long friends, Giovanni Costa and Leighton, first met. Here is the description of the delightful scene of their meeting, and of Leighton's previous introduction to Costa's work at the famous Café Greco, written by Costa after his friend's death:—

"In the year 1853, the Café Greco at Rome was a world-renowned centre of art, a rendezvous for artists of all nationalities, who had flocked to Rome to study the history of art as well as the beauties of nature surrounding the sacred walls of the Eternal City.

"At the Café Greco[1] there was a certain waiter, Rafaello, a favourite with all, who had collected an album of sketches and water-colours by the most distinguished artists, such as Cornelius, Overbeck, Français, Bénonville, Brouloff, Böcklin, and others, and I felt much flattered when I too was asked to contribute, with the result that I gave him the only water-colour I have ever done in my life. Leighton was also begged by Rafaello to do something for the album, and having it in his hands, he saw my work, and asked whose it was.

[1] The Café Greco still exists, unaltered since the days when Leighton and Gamba lunched there every day on *macaroni al burro*. I visited it last May (1906), and heard from the present proprietor that it continues to be frequented by artists of all countries. He had heard of the book of sketches, and also that Rafaello had sold it before his death, but to whom the *Padrone* could not say.

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On being told, he advised Rafaello to keep it safely, saying that one day it would be very valuable. When I came later to the Café, Rafaello told me how a most accomplished young Englishman, who spoke every language, had seen my water-colour, and all he had said about it. I was very proud of his criticism, and it gave me courage for the rest of my life.

"That same year, in the month of May, the usual artists' picnic took place at Cervara, a farm in the Roman Campagna. There used to be donkey races, and the winner of these was always the hero of the day. We had halted at Tor dé Schiavi, three miles out of Rome, and half the distance to Cervara,[1] for breakfast. Every one had dismounted and tied his beast to a paling, and all were eating merrily.

"Suddenly one of the donkeys kicked over a beehive, and out flew the bees to revenge themselves on the donkeys. There were about a hundred of the poor beasts, but they all unloosed themselves and took to flight, kicking up their heels in the air—all but one little donkey, who was unable to free himself, and so the whole swarm fell upon him.

"The picnic party also broke up and fled, with the exception of one young man, with fair, curly hair, dressed in velvet, who, slipping on gloves and tying a handkerchief over his face, ran to liberate the poor little beast. I had started to do the same, but less resolutely, having no gloves; so I met him as he came back, and congratulated him, asking him his name. And in this way I first made the acquaintance of Frederic Leighton, who was then about twenty-two years old; but I was not then aware that he was the unknown admirer of my drawing in Rafaello's album. I remember that day I had the great honour of winning the donkey race, and Leighton won the tilting at the ring with a flexible cane; therefore we met again when sharing the honour of drinking

[1] Of Cervara there is a pencil drawing by Leighton in the Leighton House Collection, in his earliest style, dated 1856.

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wine from the President's cup, and again we shook hands. When I heard from Count Gamba, who was a friend and fellow-student of Leighton's, what great talent he had, I tried to see his work and to improve our acquaintance; for as I felt I must be somewhat of a donkey myself, because of the Franciscan education I had received, and because I was the fourteenth in our family, I thought the companionship of the spirited youth would give me courage."

And again it was on the Campagna that that choice and delightful company picnicked in the spring-time of the year, of which company Leighton wrote on April 29, 1854 (see p. 146).

Who knows but that it was at one of these notable picnics that Browning was inspired to write his wonderful little poem on the Campagna?

"The Champaign, with its endless fleece
Of feathery grasses everywhere,
Silence and passion, joy and peace,
An everlasting wash of air—
Rome's ghost since her decease.

Such life there, through such lengths of hours,
Such miracles performed in play,
Such letting nature have her way
While Heaven looks from its towers."

Life was full to overflowing in those inspiring days, and Leighton was indeed "as happy as the day was long." Friendships grew apace. Many were made which were lasting, notably that with Mr. Henry Greville, the most intimate man-friend of Leighton's life. His friendships with Sir John Leslie, Mr. Cartwright, George Mason, Mr. Aitchison, Sir Edward Poynter, all began in those early happy days in Rome. Artists living there, who included this gifted brother-painter in their comradeship, showed more and more sympathy

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towards his work as they became more intimate with the delightful nature. Leighton had arrived so far forward on the threshold of his success that anxiety about his pictures was outweighed by hopeful expectancy; but it was while still standing on the threshold—that really most inspiring of all stages in the journey, during the two years from 1853 to 1855, before the great triumph of signal success crowned him—that we catch the happiest picture in Leighton's life. To use his own words, "In this world confident expectation is a greater blessing, almost, than fruition."

In a letter he wrote to Fanny Kemble on February 1, 1880, Leighton refers to a conversation he had with her at this "outset of his career"—a conversation which recurred to him, he tells her, when he first addressed the Royal Academy students from the presidential chair in 1879. He offers a copy of his discourse for her acceptance, ending his letter by the words: "If you remember that conversation, you may perhaps feel some interest in reading the Lecture, of which I ask you to accept a copy. If you do not remember it, nevertheless accept the little paper for the sake of old days which were not as to-day."[1] How much can a few words say! If gratified ambition could ever make an artist-nature happy, how transcendently happy Leighton ought to have been in 1880! But the fibre which strung the highest note in his nature never vibrated to worldly success. Though his ambition may have sought success, and his passion for fulfilling to the utmost his duty towards his fellow-creatures

[1] Fanny Kemble's answer to these words of Leighton's were:—"Thank you, my dear Sir Frederic, for the address you have been so good as to give me. You honour me by remembering any conversation you ever had with me. I remember one I had with you many years ago, but do not think you refer to that. You say no word, and you do well, upon the subject that must be uppermost in both our minds when we meet or hold any intercourse with each other—our thoughts must be of the same complexion and could hardly find any expression. Thank you again for your kindness.—I am affectionately, your obliged,

FANNY KEMBLE.

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may have greatly welcomed it, he remained to the end of his life ever on the threshold of that kingdom, the possession of which could alone have satisfied what he "*cared for most.*"

The following letters mention the progress of the *opus magnum* to its completion, also of the "Romeo" picture, and his visits to Florence and the Bagni di Lucca. The first begins by his expressing his ever-growing dislike of general society.

[*Commencement missing.*]

Miss —— is no less than ever, and no less agreeable, as far as I can judge; I have only called once as yet, I have an ungovernable horror of being asked to tea; my aversion to tea-fights, muffin-scrambles, and crumpet-conflicts, which has been gathering and festering for a long time, has now become an open wound. The more I enjoy and appreciate the society and intercourse of the dozen people that I care to know, the more tiresome I find the commerce of the others, *braves et excellentes gens du reste;* the Lord be merciful to the overwhelming insipidity of that individual whose name is Legion—the *unexceptionable*—the *highly respectable!* My great resource is, of course, Mrs. Sartoris, whom I see at some time or other every day, for it would be a blank day to me in which I did not see her; God bless her! for my dearest friend. I warm my very soul in the glow of her sisterly affection and kindness. Little baby is the same sunbeam that he always was; did I tell you I painted his likeness in oils as a surprise for his father? as a picture it is not unsuccessful, but any attempt at a portrait of that child is a profanation, and will be till we paint with the down of peaches and the blood of cherries, and mix our tints with golden sunlight; still, it pleased *them*, and that ought to be enough; but I am an artist as well as a friend. A very interesting acquaintance I have here in the shape of Rossini, the great Rossini! Poor Rossini, what a sad fate is his, to have lived to see the people on whom the glory of his splendid genius has shone turn away from him in forgetfulness, neglecting his classical

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beauties to listen to the noisy trivialities of a——, who has made the Italian name in music a by-word of ridicule; with the music of course, the singers have degenerated also; a singer no longer requires to be an *artist*, it is no longer necessary that he or she should study his or her part till every note has a meaning and a character expressive of the words of the libretto, and accompanied by musical and impassioned *mimica;* no, let the *prima donna* only squall out her never-ending *fioriture* with sufficient disregard for the safety of her lungs, or the *primo tenore* shake the stage with a *la di petto*, and all is right. This is a digression, but as an artist I can't help taking it to heart, and wanted to have it out. Amongst Mrs. Sartoris' few "intimes" at this moment is a Neapolitan lady, la Duchessa Ravaschieri, daughter of Filangièri the minister, who has given her himself an education almost unique amongst Italian noblewomen, who are insipid and ignorant beyond anything.

FLORENCE, HÔTEL DU NORD,
September 20, 1854.

DEAREST MAMMA,—I was much surprised, as we very naturally measure time past by the number of events that have taken place in it, the interval between this your last letter and the previous one seemed to me doubly long, for I have changed scene so often during these last four or five weeks, and have moved so much from place to place, that it seems to me an age since I last despatched a letter to England; from which you will naturally and correctly infer that it was a very great pleasure to me once more to see your handwriting. Your kind anxiety and advice about the cholera I shall remember when I get to Rome (which will be in a week or ten days), where that disease prevails, although mildly, for what are thirty cases a day in a town of that size? In the meantime, both at the baths where I have been, and at Florence, where I am, the cholera has not dared to show its face; indeed, such a prestige of salubrity attaches to the name of the baths of Lucca that eight days' sojourn at that place is considered tantamount to a "*quarantaine!*" It is a very strange thing, this exemption from disease, for in a number of the surrounding villages the number of people carried off has

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been frightful. As for that after apprehension of yours, dearest Mamma, about my being alone and uncared for in case of illness, I am happy to say that nothing can be more unfounded; I have in Mrs. Sartoris that genuine friend, and, especially, genuine *woman friend* that in such a case would leave nothing undone that you, the best of mothers, and my own dear sisters, would do for me. It is her habit, when any of her bachelor and homeless friends are poorly, to go and sit with them and nurse them, and do you think that I, who have become one of her most intimate circle, should need to fear neglect? In the friendship of that admirable woman I am rich for life. Poor thing, she has lately received a great blow in her own family from the sudden calamity which has befallen her. This shocking news reached me here, at Florence, where I had come on from the baths, and ascertaining that her husband was gone off to England to inquire into the matter, and that by a chance her boy's tutor was absent at the same time, I instantaneously went off to Lucca, where I stayed a week (till the return of the tutor), taking care of her boy, hearing him his lessons, and especially keeping him out of the way; in the evening I used to walk or drive with her, and to my infinite gratification was able to be some little comfort and distraction to her; my only regret in the whole business was that I was making no material sacrifice of my own time and pleasure, so that I had not the satisfaction of comforting her at my own expense. In adopting the resolution, which I have communicated to you, of retiring from society, I have taken into consideration all that you say, dear Mamma, and more too, for I feel I have of my nature a very fair share of the hateful worldly weakness of my country-people; still, I have found no sufficiently great advantage or compensation for the tedium of going out; the Roman *grand monde*, a small part of which I know, and which, had I chosen to push a little, I might have known all, is of no *use* whatever in reference to my future career; added to which I believe I told you that I never by any chance got introduced to anybody, so that whomever I know, I know by chance, or by their own wish. For instance, last winter I met the Duke of Wellington constantly, both at the Sartoris' (he is a very old friend of hers) and at the Farquhars', and though he

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is the most accessible of men, I made no attempt to make his acquaintance, and so it is with everybody. But for the *tableaux charades* which Mrs. S. gave last winter, in which I was joint-manager with herself, and was therefore brought into contact with her numerous co-operating friends, I should probably have known few or none of those who were at her house every week; always excepting our own intimate circle, to wit, Browning, Ampère, Dr. Pantaleoni, Lyons, Count Gozze, Duke Sermoneta, &c. You know, when I say I shan't go out, it is in so far a *façon de parler*, that, as I shall be at least every other day at Mrs. Sartoris', I shall not be at home, trying my eyes. I quite agree with you in thinking this business of ——'s a most awkward thing; I cannot understand a man having once gone into the army and made his profession to be honourably killed for his country, should not jump at the idea of going to the scene of war; I have felt a very strong desire to lend a hand myself, but one cannot drive two trades. My singing (in particular, and music in general) I have avoided mentioning, because, dear Mamma, it is a subject on which I have *no* reason to dwell very complacently; my first disappointment was finding my voice, instead of strengthening in an Italian climate, getting if possible weaker than it was. It is the merest "fil de voix." I have therefore as the onset very insufficient "moyens"; this is owing, not only to the insufficiency of my "organe," but also to an unpleasant visitation in the shape of swollen and irritated tonsils, the very ailment, I believe, under which Gussy labours. This symptom, which I have carried about some time, is, I fancy, not likely ever to leave me permanently; add to this that as soon as I sit down to thump with elephantine touch a most ordinary accompaniment, the little voice I have vanishes; thus between two stools . . . you know the rest. Still, I am bound to add that Mrs. Sartoris (who could not flatter) has great pleasure in hearing me coo a little song or two that I know, and says I have what is better than voice, which is a musical "accent," and that (she is pleased to add) to a rather remarkable degree; my voice is weak and powerless, but true and facile. I will tell you exactly what to expect when you see me again. I shall be able to sit down to the piano and whine some half-dozen pretty little ballads, with a rum-tum-tum accompaniment

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of affecting simplicity. Gussy dreams of me as "very handsome" and "are my whiskers growing?" I am *not* very handsome, none of my features are really *good*. My whiskers *have* grown, they are undeniable, there is no shirking them, or getting out of the way of them; *I wear whiskers* though you were short-sighted; *but* they are modest ones; as for moustaches, the seven hairs which I have (and wear) are not worth mentioning, but still I have none of that delicacy which you profess on the subject. In my opinion, *if* gentlemanhood is a thing dependent on the scraping of four square inches of your face, and residing only in the well-shaved purlieus of a (probably) ugly mouth, I feel equal to going without it, in that shape at all events. A moustache, and even a beard, if kept short enough to be in keeping with a not very flowing costume, is both becoming and convenient, and I fear that the whole prestige of respectability hovering around Mr. and Mrs. ——, or the withering contempt of the irreproachable Sir John and Lady ——, would not make me shave, unless, indeed, I felt too hot about the chin. I have gone through your letter, and shall wind up with a few words about my doings, which, by-the-bye, might be compendiously characterised by one word: *nothing*. My holidays are drawing to a close, and I shall be in Rome, working very hard to get my pictures done for the Exhibitions. Meanwhile I am enjoying Florentine sunsets, the gorgeousness of which defies description. The other day, in particular, I was on the heights near the Miniato, I thought I had never seen anything like it. I remembered Papa's fondness for that spot, and wished he had been there to share my enjoyment; the lanes were cool and pearly grey; over them hung in every fantastic shape the rich growth of the orchards and gardens that crowned the lengthened walls; the olives, strangely twisted, flaming with a thousand tongues of fire; the wreathing vine flinging its emerald skirts from tree to tree; the purple wine flashing in the fiery grape; the stately *maïs* flapping its arms in the breath of the evening; the solemn cypress; the poetic laurel; the joyous oleander—all glorified in the ardour of the setting sun, that flung its rays obliquely along the earth; you would have been enchanted.

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ROME, VIA FELICE 123,
February 10, 1855.

DEAR PAPA,—I hasten to answer your kind letter and to thank you for the willingness you express to advance such a sum of money as I shall require to cover the heavy expenses I am incurring. I forgot to mention in my last letter that my picture will be directed straight to the frame-maker's who undertakes the exhibiting of it.

In approaching the other points which you touch in your letter, I feel that my letter will unavoidably have a combative colouring, which I sincerely hope you will not misconstrue, and beg that you will consider whether the reasons I advance for not conforming to your suggestions are not sound ones. If I particularly object to accompanying my picture, it is because I think that the small advantages that might accrue from so doing would in no way make up for all I should lose; whatever can be done to my picture on its arrival in England will be kindly done for me by my friend, Mr. T. Gooderson, who is in the habit of receiving and varnishing Buckner's works on similar occasions; with respect to the interest to be made amongst the Academicians in behalf of my op. magn., I have neglected *that* on the *express advice* of Buckner, who has great experience in those matters and is a most kind and honest man; he says, such is the party spirit of R.A.'s, that the best chance of securing impartial treatment (in the case of a work of merit) is to be *completely unknown* to all of them, a condition which I am admirably calculated to fulfil. You are also perhaps not aware that my picture will reach England *five weeks* before the opening of the Exhibition, so that by accompanying it I should completely lose all the best part of the year here in Rome. There are a great number of things which I propose doing now that my pictures are about to be off my hands. There are here several very remarkable heads of which I wish to make finished studies, and especially also I am loth to go without having drawn anything from Michael Angelo and Raphael, which is one of the chief objects for which one comes to this city of the past; but, I do not hesitate to say, the principal task which I

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propose to myself is a half-length portrait of Mrs. Sartoris, to which I wish to devote my every energy that it may be worthy of perpetuating the features of the last Kemble; irrespective of the enormous artistic advantage to be derived from the study of so exceptional a head, you will easily understand my eagerness to give some tangible form to my gratitude towards those whose fireside has been my fireside for so long a time; nothing would grieve me more than missing so good an opportunity. I confess, too, that I wished to see a little more leisurely the glorious scenery that lies all round Rome, and which I have hitherto hardly glanced at, and partly indeed not seen at all. I had indeed contemplated before leaving Italy, making a trip to Naples, Capri, Oschia, Amalfi, and all the spots about which artists rave. This, however, will I fear be under all circumstances a financial *château en Espagne.*

Translation.]

ROME, VIA FELICE 123,
February 12.

HONOURED AND DEAR FRIEND,—That you, who know me so well and are so well aware of how I carry your image in my heart, could misinterpret my silence I did not fear for a moment, for rather will you have thought to yourself that the stress of my occupations in the course of the day, and my incapacity to do anything at night, have hitherto prevented me from writing; and so it is; for, be you assured, dear Friend, that, as long as I pursue art, you will be ever present with me in the spirit, and that I shall always ascribe every success which I may possibly attain in the future to your wise counsel and your inspiriting example, for "as the twig is bent the tree's inclined."

First I will tell you about my health; thank Heaven, as regards my general health, I have nothing to complain of; if not exactly strong, still I am lively and in good spirits, and look out upon the world quite contentedly. My eyes—well, yes, they might be better; otherwise I am always in a condition to work my seven or eight hours a day without over-exertion, in return for which I dare not do anything in the evenings. To tell the truth, my position is not an agreeable one; I am not bad enough to follow

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the course prescribed for me by Graefe, but on the other hand not well enough to be able to feel quite tranquil. . . .

Time has slipped away in stress of work since I commenced this letter. I throw myself again upon your goodness, dear Master, and beg you will not measure my love by my readiness in writing, for then I should certainly come off a loser. I told you that my affairs have pressed upon me; I have finished my "Cimabue." I am dreadfully disappointed, dear Friend, that I cannot, as I hoped, send you a photograph, but it has been impossible for me to have one taken, since the picture is so large that it could not be transported to a photographic loggia without fearful ado and unnecessary risk to the canvas; I will therefore exert myself to write you what it looks like. First you must know that I changed my intention as to the respective sizes of the two pictures, for I perceived that my eyes could not possibly permit the Florentine composition to be carried out on the proposed scale. I therefore took a canvas of 17½ feet (English measure), in consequence of which my figures have become half life size (like Raphael's "Madonna del Cardellino"), and do not look at all ill. The other picture (which I shall send to London) will be something over 7 feet long by 5 feet. If I am to get them both finished by next January, I must set to work in earnest. I have made the following alterations: first, those prescribed by you, viz. I have made the picture which is being carried larger, the chapel smaller, and have suppressed the flower-pots on the walls. A further alteration I have made by the advice of Cornelius; he said to me that the foremost group (the women strewing flowers with children) seemed to him somewhat to disturb the simplicity of the rest of the composition, and suggested that I should put in a couple of priests, especially as the portrait is of a Madonna and is being taken to a church; he further advised me, in order to prevent the picture from being too frieze-like, to allow this foremost group to walk up to the spectator. It now looks something like this:

(Slight sketch of the design for "Cimabue's Madonna.")

I hope with all my heart that you will approve these alterations. I have drawn a quantity of heads and hands, which are all finished,

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like the "Chiaruccia" which I gave you; drapery is not lacking. How I regret, dear Friend, that I cannot show them to you. Gamba also is very industrious; he has made endless studies, and has also got his record ready. He sends you most hearty greetings. Of his diligence there is always plenty to tell, and you will not be surprised when I tell you that he has made very gratifying progress.

I could still tell you a great deal, my dear Master, of what I have seen and experienced! but time and, alas! especially eyes compel me to be laconic, or this oft-begun letter will never be finished. Therefore I will only briefly narrate what happened to me in the imperial city; my goodness! how long ago that seems. My first impression, as I alighted from the train, was very pleasant. A lovely autumn morning, the Prater with its beautiful trees, the Jägerheil in the sunshine, all together welcomed me gaily. I alighted in the Leopold suburb, and set off on foot the same morning in quest of Kuppelwieser, a cordial, charming man. Through him I became acquainted with Führich and Roesner, who both received me no less kindly. They all remembered with warm affection their dear comrade, Steinle, and sent most hearty messages to him. Of their works (for to you, best of friends, I write frankly) I cannot, candidly, speak very highly, but perhaps I might of the tenacious maintenance of their opinion in spite of the boundless, oppressive indifference of the Viennese towards high art. Now, the dear friends are somewhat ascetic representatives of their mode of thought—a mode of thought which can be combined, as we have seen in the great days of art, with the greatest charm of representation; but this quality is unfortunately too often absent from our friends. Of the two, Kuppelwieser is the less offensive; he is perhaps rather antiquated, but not without cleverness; Führich is far too ornamental for me, and as a painter, God save the mark! Good gracious! what is nature there for? What can the people make of all this! how is it possible that one can get so far in spite of a perverted training! that people do not perceive their fearful arrogance! They plume themselves upon piety and humility, and in God's beautiful creation nothing is right for them; do they then ever admit, these gentlemen, that they do not want nature any more

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because they are aware that they no longer know how to use her? Would they feel happy if they saw a Masaccio, a Ghirlandajo, a Carpaccio? But they in their drawings are pretentious and puffed up, but there is no learnedness in them, and that which God has made so lovely with all the brilliancy of colour, they daub with any dirt, and call it a picture; some even (that was still lacking) shrug their shoulders spitefully and mock—at the unattainable. And whence does all that arise? How is it that even sensible, clever men are so ill equipped? It is due solely and alone to the topsy-turvy, involved principle of education, to the fact that the people, while they are still young, labour and worry day and night at the representation of unrepresentable ideas, instead of drawing from nature and from nothing else for ever and ever amen, till they are in close harmony with her; that would be a soil from which the tree of their art could grow upwards, fresh, powerful, ever-herbescent; that they might not stand there in their old age as high, proud, upward-aspiring trunks without leaves, without sap. Naturally all this is not aimed at the good Führich, but in general against all those who in their infatuation allow themselves, behind the shield of severe sentiments and high efforts, to throw overboard all the difficulties of art. How gladly my thoughts turn away from such unpleasing reflections to you, dearest Friend, who take nature for your model in every part of your pictures, and with your high degree of ability are always the devoted pupil of *nature!* Keep, I beg you, *your* grateful pupil in sympathetic remembrance, and never doubt the devotion of your loving friend, FRED LEIGHTON.

Please remember me most kindly to your wife; also to my other friends. If you see Schalck, will you kindly say to him that I have received his letter, and will answer it when my eyes permit. I am longing to hear what pictures and drawings you are making! Will you forgive my silence, and write to me?

My picture is under-painted grey-in-grey (*grau in grau*); I finished it in a week; it was a great effort.

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ROME, VIA FELICE,
February 19, 1855.

DEAREST MAMMA,—As the body of the letter I have just received is written by Papa, I have thought well to address to *him* the important part of mine; you will therein see all the business news that I have to give, and will, I know, be much pleased to hear that my picture has had great success here; I hope it may not have less in London. As the picture is of a jovial aspect and contains pretty faces, male and female, I think the public will find *leur affaire;* the "Romeo and Juliet" (also nearly finished) will, though perhaps a better picture, probably be less popular from its necessarily serious and dingy aspect. Dear Mamma, I am much tickled at your comparison between the Campagna and the environs of Bath; it is like saying that strawberries and cream are equal and perhaps superior to a haunch of wild boar! *l'un n'empeche pas l'autre,* but they can never be compared, nor can they answer the same purpose. The Sartoris are well; I am there every evening of my life.

The next page is Papa's. Good-bye, dear Mamma. Best love from your affectionate and dutiful son, FRED LEIGHTON.

P.S.—My resolution not to dance I have kept (excepting in the case of quadrilles), and have avoided making new acquaintances, as I intend next winter not to go out at all; but if I have no longer agitated the fantastic toe, and have acquired a cordial dislike to balls, I have been all the oftener to my dearest and best friends, the Sartoris, to whom I go about four times a week, and of whose sterling worth it is impossible to speak too warmly; at their house also I have made several interesting acquaintances; Fanny Kemble (as you know), Thackeray, Lockhart, Browning, the authors; Marochetti, the sculptor, and so on; as for Mrs. Sartoris, I look upon her as an angel, *ni plus ni moins,* and I feel terrified at the idea of how much more exacting she has made me for the future choice of a wife, by showing one what opposite excellencies a woman may unite in herself.

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To his Father—Part of letter missing.]

1855.

It is with very great pleasure that I announce to you the completion of my large picture, which I have exhibited privately to my English friends and a crowd of artists of all nations. You will, I am sure, be gratified to hear that it had a remarkable "succès"; artists of whatever school seem equally pleased, some admiring the drawing, others the colouring. I hope that what I say does not savour of vanity; I simply tell it you from a conviction that it is agreeable to you to hear what people say of your son, and to anticipate in some measure the verdict of a larger public. As for the positive *value* of it, we all know what to think about *that*. It amused me to hear that several people compared my picture to the works of Maclise, and came to conclusions considerably in my favour. Swinton paid me the compliment of requesting to be introduced to me, and seemed very sincerely to admire my picture, as also a portfolio of leads which I have drawn at different times, and which are much admired by everybody.

Of course you did perfectly right in not dreaming of exhibiting Isabel's likeness. Pray do not think from what I said about my lengthened stay in Rome, that I undervalue the delight of seeing you all again, but still I think that if by a little postponement I can have that pleasure without losing my spring, it would be better. My idea is to remain in Italy till the end of May, and then visiting Paris (to see the great Exhibition) on my road to get home by the middle or end of June, which will still leave me a long summer's holiday.

This letter from his mother contains the news of Leighton's father's joy at the success of the picture in Rome :—

February 18, 1855.

Now I think of it, you have probably some signs of spring about you—how enviable! My dear Fred, I did not compare the artistic resources of Bath with those of Rome, well knowing that the transparent atmosphere there imparts beauty to the

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country which, without it, might not be remarked; equally bright and clear the sky is not in England, but I assure you that many parts of the country near us and in Devonshire, and doubtless in many other counties, may for beauty challenge a comparison with many most admired spots in Italy and elsewhere, though the character of the landscape is different. Nevertheless, I shall be very glad to see again Switzerland, Southern Germany, &c. &c. Pray, dear Fred, if you do go to sketch in the Campagna, take care not to expose yourself to any disagreeable adventures with Brigands; I *entreat* you, be prudent. Not to tire you with repetition, I have not alluded to the success of your picture, but I must tell you that your father was radiant with joy as he read your letter and gave it into my hands with the words, "That *is* a satisfactory letter." I am curious to know *when* we shall see your Paris picture, and whether we shall winter in that delightful town; Papa and I have always wished it. I must just mention, what I had nearly forgotten, that a great treat is in store for the inhabitants of Bath, as next week Mrs. Fanny Kemble is to read some of Shakespeare's plays in public, with appropriate music. A great treat is expected. God bless you, love, I can no more. Our united affectionate greetings.—Your attached Mother,

A. LEIGHTON.

ROME, *January* 3, 1855.
(*Recd. January* 12.)

DEAREST MAMMA,—Let me hasten to reassure my poor dear progenitor on the subject of his anxieties; if I spoke doubtfully and despondently of my performances, it was owing to the lively feeling that every artist, whose ideal is beyond the applause of the many, must entertain of his own shortcomings; once and for all let me beg him never to feel any uneasiness on the score of mechanical processes, as in such cases one always has the resource of cutting the Gordian knot by painting over again the unsuccessful portions, an expedient indeed to which I have many a time been forced to resort; the result of such failures is called experience; through such failures alone one arrives at success. Nor am I wanting in the applause of my friends, who all speak in praise and encouragement of my works, and it is

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not a little gratifying to me to find that those whose opinions I most value are the first to speak favourably of my endeavours; as agreeable as is to me this testimony on their part, so indifferent am I, and must I beg you to be (for better and for worse) to the scribbling of pamphleteers; the self-complacent oracularity of these *pachidermata* is rivalled only by their gross ignorance of the subjects they bemaul, and the conventional flatness of all their views; I speak without fear of being considered partial, as the article which you communicate to me contains more of praise than of blame; it is, however, my practice never to accept (inwardly) the praise of those whose blame I don't acknowledge. I happen to have seen other articles from the pen of this same Mister ——, and know *à quoi m'en tenir.* The notice on myself I had heard of, but not seen. It may amuse you to hear that my draperies have been considered (alas!) the most successful part of my picture, and I am at present labouring hard to bring the heads, &c., *up to them!* In about a fortnight, the large work ("Cimabue," the "canvas of many feet") will be, D.V., finished, with the exception of the ultimate glazes and retouches; by the end of February, both pictures will start for their respective destinations. One thing has caused me some annoyance and anxiety; I wrote a month ago (or more) to one Mr. Allen, carver and gilder, 31 Ebury Street, Pimlico, sending a design of my frame, and requesting him to let me know at once what would be the cost of such a frame, whether he would undertake it, and asking many questions important to me to know; I have received no answer; I therefore must take for granted that either he has not received my letter, or his answer to me has been lost; now, as there is no longer any time to correspond on the subject, I must, on the supposition that my letter has gone astray, send another design together with an unconditional order to begin at once at whatever cost; now I grudge the time of writing a duplicate of my old letter, and especially that of drawing a new diagram for his guidance. With regard to the price, Fripp, who recommended him to me, says Allen is a very respectable man, and will no way take advantage of my awkward position; I calculate the frame can hardly exceed five and twenty pounds; then there

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will be the bill for exhibiting the picture of which he will take charge; I expect that the framing, packing, sending, &c., of the two canvases together will cost about fifty pounds "tant pis pour moi!"

(Here the letter breaks off.)

(*Cover*—Madame Leighton,
9 Circus, Bath, England.)

ROME, VIA FELICE 123,
March 2, 1855.
(*On cover—Recd. April* 12.)

DEAR PAPA,—I received a day or two ago the kind letter in which you inform me of the disposition you have made to enable me to get the money I want, and for which I sincerely thank you; your letter reached me just as I was driving the last nail into the coffin of my large picture; the small had been disposed of in like manner the day before. Delighted as I am to have got them at last off my hands, yet I felt a kind of strange sorrow at seeing them nailed up in their narrow boxes; it was so painfully like shrouding and stowing away a corpse, with the exception, by-the-bye, that my pictures may possibly return to my bosom long before the Last Judgment. With regard to the success of my picture with its little Roman public, nearly all the praise that reached my ears was bestowed *behind my back*, so that whether intelligent or no, I have good reason to believe it was sincere; indeed, I should not else have said anything about it; Cornelius, I am sincerely sorry to say, did not see my daubs in their finished state; he was prevented by ill-health; however, all the advice he could give me I got out of him in the beginning, and indeed, as you know, altered about a dozen figures at his request; in points of material execution he is utterly incompetent; I am happy to say that he feels very kindly towards me, as indeed he told me in plain words, and added on one occasion, "Sie können für England etwas bedeutendes werden;" I need not tell you that as he is altogether without apprehension of the peculiar and very great merits of some of our artists, he considerably overvalues my (relative) value. You ask for *my* opinion of my pictures; you couldn't ask a more embarrassing and unsatisfactory question; I think, indeed, that they are very creditable works for my age, but I am anything but satisfied with them, and believe that I could paint both of them

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better now; I am particularly anxious that persons whom I love or esteem should think neither more nor less of my artistic capacity than I deserve; the plain truth; I am therefore very circumspect in passing a verdict on myself in addressing myself to such persons; I think, however, you may expect me to become eventually the best draughtsman in my country; Gibson and Miss Hosmer are, as you expect, amongst those who praise me, but I warn you that they are both utterly without an opinion in matters pictorial. Who is ——? He is, *entre nous*, the worst painter I ever saw, but also the greatest toady, in virtue of which quality he makes £5000 a year by portraying the nobility of Great Britain and Ireland; however, towards me he has been very pleasant and nice, and so long as there is no lord in the way he is a sufficiently companionable person. I certainly feel very little desire to have my "Cimabue" hung in the little room you speak of, but I fear that I must take my chance with the rest; the fact is that although I personally have taken no steps in the matter, still "ces messieurs" will not be unprepared for my picture, because I know that old Leitch for one will speak to them about it and will do everything that is friendly; he even offered to varnish it, but *that* another friend of mine has already undertaken. One thing is certain, they can't hang it out of sight—it's too large for that. I must leave myself room to write afterwards to Mamma. . . .

. . . I am glad that you have made up your mind to not seeing me as soon as you expected; indeed I felt sure that when I told you all the reasons which concurred to make me prolong my stay, you would feel the force of them; I willingly confess, too, that I was most strongly biassed on the matter by my reluctance to part from my friends, but particularly *her*. I am horrified at the use you make of the words "indefinite time"; I shall certainly never live long anywhere without going to see them, and I trust that our "intimes relations" will not cease as long as I live. How sorry I am that I should not have known in time that Mrs. Kemble was to read in Bath; I should have liked so to introduce you to her; you no doubt found her reading a rare treat. How beautiful is the "Midsummer Night's Dream" with Mendelssohn's music! This reminds me of dear Gussy and *her* music; I suppose her new master is a good one, or she

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would not have taken him; generally speaking I have a sovereign dislike for the *engeance* of *pianistes* with their eternal jingle-tingles at the top of the piano, their drops of dew, their sources, their fairies, their bells, and the vapid runs and futile conceits with which they sentimentalise and torture the motive of other men; we have a specimen here in the shape of the all-fashionable—— . . .

Referring to a lady of his acquaintance, he continues:—

She has acquired by her melancholy and sometimes haughty moods a character for misanthropy which she has not cared to refute; but, my good sir, she is DIVORCED! Poor cowards! should they not rather gather her to them, and "weep with her that weeps," Bible-wise Pharisees! Your letter is full of thrilling events: children born among the Australian flocks of Mr. Donaldson; little ——, too, taking to herself a husband—alas for the Laird of (probably) Ballyshallynachurighawalymoroo! I must think of answering dear Gussy's note, and close with a hearty kiss, from your dutiful and affectionate son, FRED LEIGHTON.

DEAREST GUSSY,—Many thanks to you for your kind note and for the sympathy and interest which you both offer and ask. How heartily sorry I am that you should still be persecuted by the soreness in your throat, and should be prevented, poor dear, from singing; you who have the rare gift of that which is unteachable and without which the most brilliant execution is dumb to the heart; I mean musical accent. I had hoped that we should sing together, but I fear that if the air of Bath has such a bad effect on the throat, I shall be invalided as well as yourself. What is about the compass of your voice? or (which is more important) in what *tessitura* do you sing with least discomfort? that I may see whether anything I sing will suit us; unfortunately most part of my limited *répertoire* consists of the first tenor part in quintettes and quartettes, which are not available for us two. I don't know whether I told you that I take a part in Mrs. Sartoris' musical evenings, in which I officiate as *primo tenore;* you may imagine how great an enjoyment this is to me. Dear Gussy, how I wish you could hear *her* sing! it would

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enlarge your ideas and open out your heart; I am sadly afraid, however, that she won't winter in Paris, so that if you go there you must make up your mind to not meeting her; but if you are in England in October she may possibly be there by that time, and you might make her acquaintance; if I sell either of my pictures, and am "sur les lieux" at the time, I will take you and Lina to town at my own expense and introduce you to the dearest friend I have in the world; I long for you to know and love one another. You ask me whether she is like her sister; in *expression*, sometimes, strikingly like; in *feature*, not in the least. She is the image of John Kemble, with large aquiline nose and the most beautiful mouth in the world, a most harmonious head, and, like Fanny, the hair low down on her forehead; artistically speaking, her head and shoulders are the finest I ever saw with the exception only of Dante's; in spite of all this, many people think her barely good-looking, because she has no complexion, very little hair, and is excessively stout; *you* will be more discriminating. I am amused at Mamma's asking me in her letter whether I know why —— did not know the Sartoris! Pardi! I did not introduce them,—in the first place I have been obliged to make a rule to introduce nobody to that house, as I should otherwise become a nuisance; people have constantly fished for introductions knowing my intimacy; but the chief reason is that Mrs. Sartoris has the judgment and courage to ask to her house nobody but those she *likes* for some reason or other, for which reason her house is the most sociable in the world; her "intimes" are a complete medley, from the Duke of Wellington down to a poor artist with one change of boots, but *all* agreeable for some reason; I know that she would be kind to *any one I* brought to her, but I also know that the ——s would have been in the way and a *corvée* to her, which fully accounts, &c. &c.

I am delighted, dear Guss, that you have a music master to your heart, and that you have been considered worthy to play Bach's Fugues, which are indeed monstrous difficult. With regard to the pianistic style and the dewdrop-warbling school, you need not fear that *I* should throw sour grapes in your teeth about *that*; *franchement*, the —— after all is commonplace enough,

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and the ——, though pretty, hardly deserves such an epithet as beautiful; as for the ——, it's just ludicrous. Did you ever hear —— piano-doodle himself?

I was rather surprised at the judgment you pass on Fanny Kemble's reading; if *anything* seems at all coarse in it, it is occasional bits in the *male* part, and that only, after all, because it is *too* good and it seems discrepant to hear male harsh sounds proceeding from the mouth of a woman. With regard to her women, nothing can be more pathetic and touching than her Juliet, or indeed all the women I have heard her do; there is altogether in her style a certain amount of mannerism belonging to the Kemble school, but in spite of all that, it is quite unapproachable now and is grand in the extreme; the Ghost in "Hamlet" is quite a creation. You seem, like Mamma, to apologise almost for expressing an admiration for my photograph; do you think, dear, that I don't value your sympathy irrespectively of your art judgment? I shall send you soon two photographs of portraits that I am now painting; one of Mrs. Sartoris, the other of her little daughter May. I must close.—With very best love to all, I remain, your very affectionate brother,

FRED LEIGHTON.

The change Leighton made in his picture at the request of Cornelius, mentioned in his letter to his father, dated March 2, 1855, can be seen by comparing the pencil sketch of the complete design with the finished painting (see List of Illustrations). It consisted in his making the Procession turn at the left-hand corner to face spectator, instead of filling in this space and giving the required grouping of lines partly by the foreshortened horse and its rider which we find in the first sketch. In the Leighton House Collection there is a fine study in pencil of the undraped figure of the man riding which is not included in the final design. There are those who remembered the picture when first painted in Rome, also at the Exhibitions in Trafalgar Square and Burlington House, who were of opinion that it was never seen so

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advantageously as on the occasion when the King lent it for exhibition in the artist's own studio in Leighton House in the year 1900, and many seeing it there exclaimed, "Leighton never did a finer thing;" and, truly, seen, as it was then, placed across the end of the glass studio under perfect conditions of lighting and surroundings, the power and originality both in the colouring and design of the work were very striking and impressive. Leighton's friends felt specially grateful to the King, for an opportunity having been afforded for the public to see this early work under such favourable and appropriate circumstances. During those months when the picture was shown at Leighton House, it felt as if the very spirit of the young artist, at the time when he was starting on his notable career, had returned and was haunting the home of his later years. From the end of the large studio, looking through the darkened passage connecting the two rooms, the procession verily looked alive, a *tableau vivant*—no mere painting.

One of the salient virtues in the composition lies in the happy way in which the two central figures take a separate important position, without the moving on of the procession being interrupted nor their attitudes being in any sense forced. On the contrary, it is by their absorbed, modest demeanour, which contrasts with the rest of the gay crowd, talking, singing, and playing musical instruments as it moves along, that the sense of awe and reverence felt by the two artist spirits becomes accentuated. These recognise in this public ovation bestowed on the picture of their beloved "Madonna and Child" the union of a service offered both to Art and to Religion.

The happiness Leighton enjoyed during the two years when this subject occupied his thoughts seems to have been reflected in the vigour of the actual painting. It was evidently finally executed with an exuberant feeling of satisfaction.

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Careful studies having been previously made for every portion, the under-painting itself was, as he writes to Steinle, completed in one week, and the canvas once attacked, there appears to have been no hitch in the process of completion. The happy balancing of masses, the grouping of the figures, the beauty of the lines throughout the crowded procession are admirable. The picture was admitted by competent judges to be a work marked by a distinct individuality, yet possessing "style," a word which in recent years had been associated in England with art that lacked vigour and originality, and which flavoured solely of obsolete grooves and theories. The colour is richer and purer than in Leighton's earliest pictures, and arranged cleverly so as to give full importance and value to the beautiful white costume worn by Cimabue.[1] Sir William Richmond, R.A., writes: "Impressions of early years are not easily removed. As a boy at school I went to the R.A. Exhibition, and saw for the first time a work of Leighton's, the procession in honour

[1] Ruskin wrote the following criticism of the picture when it was first exhibited: "This is a very important and very beautiful picture. It has both sincerity and grace, and is painted on the purest principles of Venetian art—that is to say, on the calm acceptance of the whole of nature, small and great, as, in its place, deserving of faithful rendering. The great secret of the Venetians was their simplicity. They were great colourists, not because they had peculiar secrets about oil and colour, but because when they saw a thing red they painted it red, and . . . when they saw it distinctly they painted it distinctly. In all Paul Veronese's pictures the lace borders of the tablecloths or fringes of the dresses are painted with just as much care as the faces of the principal figures; and the reader may rest assured that in all great Art it is so. Everything in it is done as well as it can be done. Thus, in the picture before us, in the background is the Church of San Miniato, strictly accurate in every detail; on top of the wall are oleanders and pinks, as carefully painted as the church; the architecture of the shrine on the wall is studied from thirteenth-century Gothic, and painted with as much care as the pinks; the dresses of the figures, very beautifully designed, are painted with as much care as the faces; that is to say, all things throughout with as much care as the painter could bestow. It necessarily follows that what is most difficult (*i.e.* the faces) should be comparatively the worst done. But if they are done as well as the painter could do them, it is all we have to ask, and modern artists are under a wonderful mistake in thinking that when they have

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of the picture by Cimabue in Florence, 1855. It stood out among the other pictures to my young eye as a work so complete, so noble in design, so serious in sentiment and of such achievement, that perforce it took me by the throat."

Leighton sent a photograph of the picture to Steinle with a letter dated March 1.

Translation.]

ROME, VIA FELICE 123,
March 1, 1855.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,—Although since my last letter I have had no news of you, I cannot pass by this moment, so important to me, without giving you intelligence of it. Yesterday I at last sent off both my pictures, the large one to London, the small one to Paris, with the consignment of the Roman Committee. Thank goodness, at last I have got them off my mind! And how sorry I am, dear Friend, that I could not put the finishing touches to them in your presence! Of the "Cimabue," I send you, in two pieces, a very bad photograph, but it is the

painted faces ill, they make their pictures more valuable by painting the dresses worse.

"The painting before us has been objected to because it seems broken up in bits. Precisely the same objection would hold, and in very nearly the same degree, against the best works of the Venetians. All faithful colourists' work, in figure-painting, has a look of sharp separation between part and part. . . . Although, however, in common with all other work of its class, it is marked by these sharp divisions, there is no confusion in its arrangement. The principal figure is nobly principal, not by extraordinary light, but by its own pure whiteness; and both the master and the young Giotto attract full regard by distinction of form and face. The features of the boy are carefully studied, and are indeed what, from the existing portraits of him, we know those of Giotto must have been in his youth. The head of the young girl who wears the garland of blue flowers is also very sweetly conceived."

D. G. Rossetti wrote to his friend, William Allingham, May 11, 1855: "There is a big picture of Cimabue, one of his works in procession, by a new man, living abroad, named Leighton—a huge thing, which the Queen has bought; which every one talks of. The R.A.'s have been gasping for years for some one to back against Hunt and Millais, and here they have him, a fact that makes some people do the picture injustice in return. It was very interesting to me at first sight; but on looking more at it, I think there is great richness of arrangement, a quality which, when really existing, as it does in the best old masters, and perhaps hitherto in no living man—at any rate English—ranks among the great qualities."

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best that could be made within four walls; from it you will only be able to judge generally of the grouping, for as regards the colour, which comes out so black in the photograph, in the picture it is altogether clear and light. You will certainly be glad to hear that this work has earned much praise here; I promised that you should not have to be ashamed of your pupil. The small picture is so dark in effect, that it would be impossible to photograph it; but as I suppose you, like all the rest of the world, will visit the great exhibition in Paris, you can avail yourself of the same opportunity to see my daub.

Gamba is, now as ever, industrious, tireless, conscientious; his picture *also* will be finished in a few weeks, and will be a great credit to him; I only wish he had a prospect of selling it, but at present the sale of pictures is stagnant, especially in Piedmont, where the art-loving Queen-Mother has died. He will have to fight hard against the gigantic pedantry of the Turin Academy and College of Painters (*Malfacultät*), for he paints things exactly as he sees them in nature; God be with him! Of course, he sends you heartfelt greetings. Of other artistic doings in Rome I cannot tell you much; I think I have already told you that I look upon Rome as the grave of art; for a young artist, I mean, for whom actively suggestive surroundings are necessary. As regards the so-called German historical art, that is not much of a joke to me; when men, out of pure impotence, throw themselves under the shield of noble tendencies, in order to make mistaken efforts to imitate the work of other painters, they are simply ridiculous; but when men are endowed with fine natural gifts, and nevertheless out of sheer queerness and pedantry go altogether astray, then I only feel angry. God forgive me if I am intolerant, but according to my view an artist must produce his art out of his own heart; or he is none.

Dear Master, I may perhaps pass through Frankfurt on my way back (in June); I should like beyond all things to see you again, you and your works that are so dear to me. Have you painted the "Death of Christ" which pleased me so much? Write to me if you have time, and tell me how things go with you. Keep a friendly recollection of your grateful, affectionate pupil,

FRED. LEIGHTON.

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Translation.]

FRANKFURT AM MAIN,
March 20, 1855.

DEAR FRIEND,—My best thanks for your dear lines of the 1st and for the photographs, with which you afforded me the greatest pleasure. I had an idea that I should receive this friendly remembrance, and I hope that you have meanwhile received my letter of the 3rd March. I know the difference in a photograph of a painting, and the often quite contrary effect of the yellow and red, too well to be deceived by a dark impression; the masses, their distribution, alike in the groups and in the light and shade, the outline of the background, most of the single figures, all please me very well, and you could not believe how much I rejoice in every detail in which I recognise my Leighton, and when I see how all these have been achieved so thoroughly by industrious study and artistic culture. You have indeed prepared a real feast for me, my good wishes in my last letter were quite the right ones, and the recognition which you have obtained in Rome was certainly well earned. I am convinced that Overbeck was heartily pleased with your pictures. It was perhaps my imagination, dear friend, when I thought from your letter that there was a slight cloud between us, but I think it will be torn away when these lines reach you. The fond idea of being again able to share your life and artistic work, I must relinquish, for I am an exile, and besides cannot make myself familiar with your progress as an artist in the Fatherland. Shall, then, your stay in Italy be ended by the journey which you led me to hope would bring you to see me again? But I forget so easily that we live in a world of renunciations, and that often when we believe we are disposing, we are disposed. My spirit and my love will always, wherever you may be, be with you. It occurred to me that probably our excellent Gamba would not send his great picture to Paris, and yet I seem to have heard that he intended doing so; it appears to me that exhibition in Paris would give the picture more importance than in Turin; that Gamba would triumph over the academic formalities in Turin, I do not doubt in the least. His grandmother and all his friends await him here; on a journey to Paris?—Now, dear

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friend, one more request. Ihlée brought from Rome some photographic views, with which I and the friends who know Rome are truly delighted; the worthy Frau Rath Sclosser wishes very much to possess a selection of twelve, I myself would like to have at least three, will you be so good as to bring them with you in June, and also yourself take the trouble to make a really beautiful selection? You will oblige me thereby very greatly. I shall rejoice excessively to see you again, and wish much that your stay in Frankfurt need not be so short. Remember me cordially to Gamba, and give my kindest regards to Altmeister Cornelius. My wife thanks you for your kind remembrance, and sends many greetings. All friends here have bidden me send their best wishes to you and Gamba. Adieu, dear friend, always and altogether yours,

EDW. STEINLE.

Translation.]

ROME, *April* 15, 1855.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,—Only a day or two after I sent off my letter with the photograph, I received your dear lines, and now I have also the letter in which you acknowledge receipt of mine, so that I am well off for news of you. All the affection and kind sympathy which you express for me has affected me deeply, and I look forward with sincere pleasure to the moment when I shall be able personally to express my gratitude to you; I am also most eager to see the drawings of the completion of which you tell me; judging by the sketches, I expect great things from this composition, so rich in imagination; I saw the first beginnings of it. That you are pleased with my photograph rejoices me extremely, but I am sorry that you have not mingled some blame with the praise; you say that *most* of my figures please you well; ergo, some of them do not; which are they? why not tell me all? do you no longer regard me as your pupil? From one part of your letter I understand that you think I have had a great deal of intercourse with good old Overbeck; that is not so; he and his followers one does not see at all unless one belongs to their clique; Overbeck has never been within my four walls. Cornelius I see less seldom, but not very often; he is a very charming old man, so cheerful and friendly, and is of great

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strength; for the rest, he has some little queernesses; he said to me once, "Yes, Nature has also her style" (!). Does that not bespeak a curious mental development?

Gamba will not, as it happens, send his picture to Paris, it was not ready in time; meantime, it is being exhibited here in the Piazza del Popolo, and receives the applause it merits; he sends you most cordial greeting.

Yes, indeed, the years of my "Italian Journey" are now ended! It seems but yesterday that we first took leave of one another, and you encouraged me upon my setting forth; the remembrance makes me sad at heart; I cannot help asking myself whether my expectations for these three years have been fulfilled: and the question remains unanswered.

My stay in Italy will always remain a charming memory to me; a beautiful, irrecoverable time; the young, careless, independent time! I have also made some friends here who will always be dear to me, and to whom I particularly attribute my attachment to Rome.

From an artistic point of view I am quite glad to leave Rome, which I, *for a beginner*, regard as the grave of art. A young man needs before all things the emulation of his contemporaries; this I lack here in the highest degree; also here I cannot learn my *trade*, and, notwithstanding Cornelius, I am of opinion that the spirit cannot work effectively until the hand has attained complete pliancy, and I cannot see what right a painter has to evade the difficulties of painting; Cornelius always says, "Take care that the hand does not become master of the spirit," and that sounds well enough; however, I see that, in consequence of his scheme of development, he has not once succeeded in painting a head reasonably, not once in modelling as the *form* requires; and that, with all his magnificent talent! Judge the tree by the fruit. How are the frescoes of Raphael painted and modelled? and the Sixtine Chapel! the lower part of the "Day of Judgment" is in a high degree *colouristic* (*Koloristisch*). *Those* people took nature straight from God, and were not ashamed; therefore their art was no galvanised mummy.

I must close. Please remember me most kindly to your wife, and to my other friends. For yourself, keep in remembrance, your grateful and affectionate pupil, FRED. LEIGHTON.

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Steinle answers :—

Translation.]

FRANKFURT AM MAIN, *May* 6, 1855.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,—Hearty thanks for your friendly note of April. The photograph of your picture quite pleases me as it is, and if I am particularly pleased with the details, that is to cast no discredit on the whole; for a general criticism the photograph does not give me sufficient certainty, and I must content myself, this time, with expressing the pleasure your always well-composed pictures give me. You know your picture, and can see more in the photograph than I. What you say about Overbeck, Cornelius, and Rome, I understand well, and I am in sympathy with much of it; but I am almost beginning to fear you, especially as I particularly feel how much I myself am wanting in ground-work, how much I myself belong to the same evolution as these two men. Custom, circumstances, and the tendencies of the times, are often mitigating facts in our judgment of these painters; they have fought against things of which we no longer know anything, and, as participators in their art, we stand, to a certain extent, shoulder to shoulder with them; their delicacies are proofs of their struggle, and the characteristic of youth becomes in old age principally a sign of weakness. Also experience has taught me not to let myself be deceived by what is called "cliquiness," I grant you that this is not an infallible judgment, which is often to be regretted, but people nowadays are weak, and I have found that cliques often have a greater tendency for good than those judgments which make more noise, a greater outcry than the fact warrants. Overbeck has always withdrawn himself too much; but now, dear friend, you must attack him on the subject before you leave Rome. Kindest regards to Gamba, to whom I wish a happy completion of his picture. My wife sends best greetings. Always and altogether yours,

EDW. STEINLE.

We have read in Leighton's letters the effect the "Cimabue's Madonna" produced on his friends in Rome, and how

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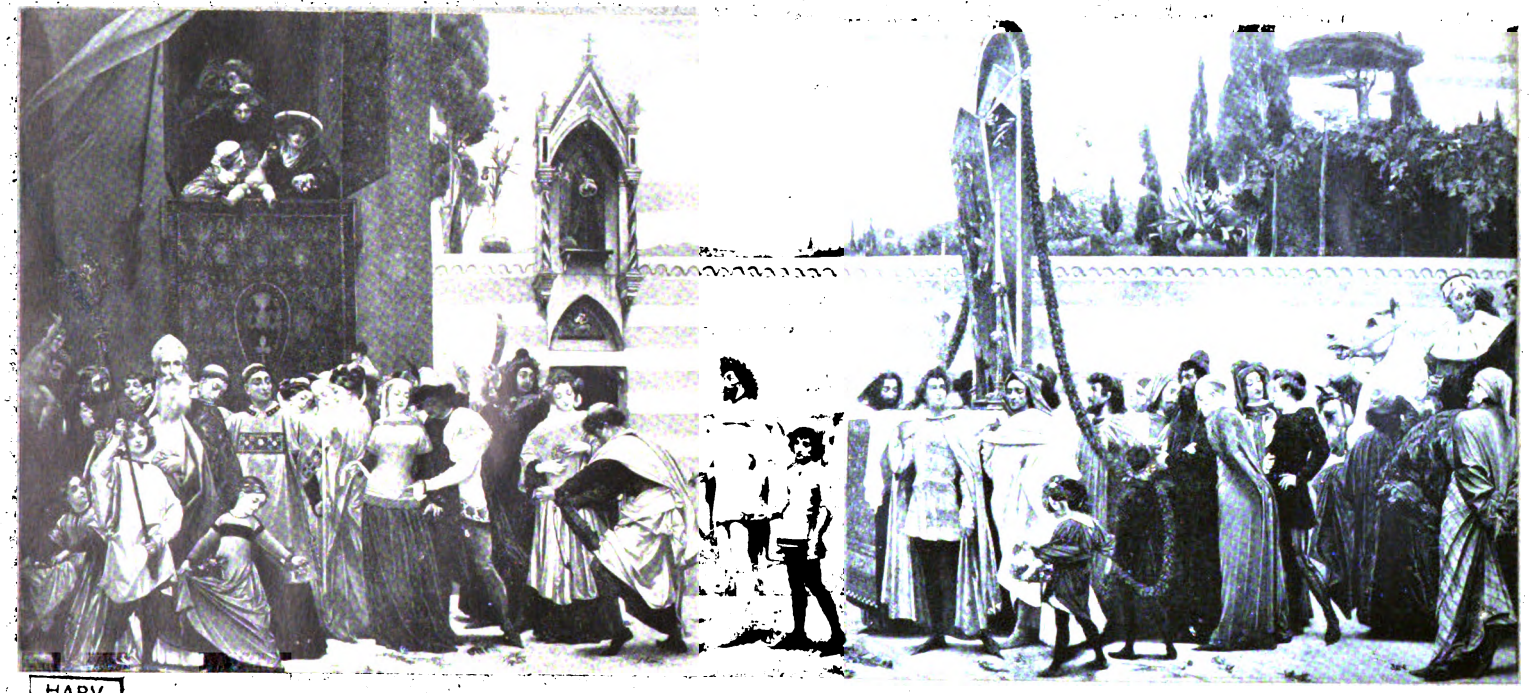

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"CIMABUE'S 'MADONNA' CARRIED IN PROCESSION THROUGH THE STREETS OF FLORENCE." 1855

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it was nailed up as "in a coffin" and despatched from the Eternal City, where it was destined never to return.

There exists a small long envelope edged with black, stained horny yellow by time, the head of Queen Victoria on the postage stamp. It was despatched from England to Rome over fifty years ago. In the ardent spirit of the young artist who had been eagerly awaiting tidings of his first great venture, what a tumult of excitement must the contents of that small envelope have aroused! They brought with them a conclusive and triumphal end to all arguments with his father concerning the career Leighton had chosen; they realised the sanguine hopes of his beloved master, Steinle, and of his other friends; last not least, they gave him the means and the great happiness of helping his fellow-artists. To quote again from the record of one who was with him in Rome at the time: "My husband[1] remembers the departure of his picture 'The Triumph of Cimabue,' sent with diffidence, and so, proportionate was the joy when news came of its success, and that the Queen had bought it. It was the month of May. Rome was at its loveliest, and Leighton's friends and brother-artists gave him a festal dinner to celebrate his honours. On receiving the news, Leighton's first act was to fly to three less successful artists and buy a picture from each of them. (George Mason, then still unknown, was one.) And so Leighton reflected his own happiness at once on others."

Translation.]

ROME, 123 VIA FELICE,
May 18, 1855.

DEAR AND HONOURED FRIEND,—As with everything that I receive from you, I was delighted to get your dear lines of the 6th; one thing only in them grieved me a little, *i.e.* that what I said about the German historical painters here seems to have

[1] Sir John Leslie.

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rather jarred upon you. Was I then so intolerant in my expressions? I hope not. You say that you are almost afraid of me. When I spoke to you so freely of the others, was that not a plain proof of how completely I except you? You assuredly know, dear Master, how and what I think of you, and that I ascribe entirely to you my whole æsthetic culture in art. Your commission to good old Overbeck I have executed as well as I could. I found him much more cheerful and less ailing than before. He received me with the greatest amiability; we spoke, amongst other things, of you, and I perceived that he had it in his mind to go soon to Germany and to spend a couple of weeks in Mainz; I should like to be the first to give you this good news.

As for myself, dear Friend, my plans are once more quite upset. My father has hastily recalled me to England, and I am sorry to say that I must consequently give up going to Frankfurt. However, I have not neglected your commission. I have chosen the photographs, and you will receive them in the beginning of next month, and that by a friend of mine who will be passing through Frankfurt, and whom I hereby introduce to you. Mrs. Sartoris is my dearest friend, and the noblest, cleverest woman I have ever met; I need not say more to secure her a cordial welcome from you. She is one of the celebrated theatrical family of Kemble. It is now ten or eleven years since she left the stage, but she is still the greatest living cantatrice.[1]

[1] Mrs. Richmond Ritchie gives a very charming account of her first introduction in the Rome of those days to Leighton's friend, the great *cantatrice*, Mrs. Sartoris, in the preface to the edition of "A Week in a French Country House," published in 1902. Thackeray, Mrs. Ritchie's father, and Charles Kemble, Mrs. Sartoris' father, had been old friends. Mrs. Ritchie says: "The writer's first definite picture of her old friend (Mrs. Sartoris) remains as a sort of frontispiece to many aspects and remembrances. We were all standing in a big Roman drawing-room with a great window to the west, and the colours of the room were not unlike sunset colours. There was a long piano with a bowl of flowers on it in the centre of the room; there were soft carpets to tread upon; a beautiful little boy in a white dress, with yellow locks all a-shine from the light of the window, was perched upon a low chair looking up at his mother, who with her arm round him stood by the chair, so that their two heads were on a level. She was dressed (I can see her still) in a sort of grey satin robe, and her beautiful proud head was turned

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Reproduction of Letter written by Sir Charles Eastlake, P.R.A., to Lord Leighton, announcing the fact that Queen Victoria had purchased his picture, "Cimabue's Madonna." 1855.

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Sir Charles Eastlake presents his compliments to Mr Frederic Leighton and has the pleasure to acquaint him that the Queen has to day been pleased to express her intention of being the purchaser of his picture of Cimabue's Procession. Sir C. Eastlake, according to Mr Leighton's communication to the Secretary, named the price of 600 guineas to Her Majesty.

7 Fitzroy Square
3 May 1855

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You will certainly be glad to hear that on the first day of the Exhibition my picture was bought by the Queen.

I am at this moment in the thick of packing; you must excuse, dear Friend, my ending so abruptly. I will write again from England.—Your grateful pupil, FRED LEIGHTON.

towards the child. She seemed pleased to see my father, who had brought us to be introduced to her, and she made us welcome, then, and all that winter, to her home. In that distant, vivid hour (there may be others as vivid now for a new generation) Rome was still a mediæval city—monks in every shade of black and grey and brown were in the streets outside with their sandalled feet flapping on the pavement; cardinals passed in their great pantomime coaches, rolling on with accompaniment of shabby cocked-hats and liveries to clear a way; Americans were rare and much made of; English were paramount; at night oil-lamps swung in the darkness. Many of the ruins of the present were still in their graves peacefully hidden away for another generation to unearth; the new buildings, the streets, the gas lamps, the tramways were not. The Sartorises had fireplaces with huge logs burning; Mrs. Browning sat by her smouldering wood fire; but we in our lodging still had to light brazen pans of charcoal to warm ourselves if we shivered. At my request an old friend, who for our good fortune has kept a diary, opens one of his pretty vellum-bound note-books, and evokes an hour of those old Italian times from the summer following that Roman winter. He tells of a peaceful Sunday at Lucca, a place of which I have often heard Mrs. Sartoris speak with pleasure; Leighton and Hatty Hosmer and Hamilton Aidé himself are there; they are all sitting peacefully together on some high terrace with a distant view of the spreading plains, while Mrs. Sartoris reads to them out of one of her favourite Dr. Channing's sermons. Another page tells of a party at Ostia. 'Very pleasant we made ourselves in a pine wood,' says the diarist; 'I walked by A. S.'s *chaise-à-porteur* up the hills later in the evening She talked of her past life and all its trials, and of her early youth.' Mrs. Ritchie in her preface also tells of this 'past life.'

"The Rue de Clichy of which he (Thackeray) speaks was the street in which Miss Foster lived, under whose care both Fanny and Adelaide Kemble were placed, when they successively went to Paris. Then each in turn came out and made her mark, and each in turn married and left the stage for that world in which real tragedies and real comedies are still happening, and where men and women play their own parts instinctively and sing their own songs. Adelaide's short artistic career lasted from 1835 to 1842, long enough to impress all the subsequent years of her life. With all the welcoming success which was hers, there must have been many a moment of disillusion, discouragement, and suffering for a girl so original, so aristocratic in instinct, so quick of perception, so individual, '*De la bohême exquise*,' as some great lady once described her. The following page out of one of her early diaries gives a vivid picture of one side of her artistic life: '. . . Received an intimation that the company who are to act with me had arrived at Trieste, and would be here at eleven to rehearse the music. At twelve

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So ended the first page of Leighton's life as an artist in the Rome of the fifties—a very different Rome to that of the present. The atmosphere was still steeped in those days with a flavour belonging to the Papal temporal dominion, and the visible life still picturesque with the costumes and grandeur of mediæval customs.

came Signor Caranco (the director of the music), and a dirty-looking little object, who turned out to be the prompter. After they had sat some time wondering what detained the rest, a little fusty woman, with a grey-coloured white petticoat dangling three inches below her gown, holding a thin shivering dog by a dirty pocket-handkerchief, and followed by a tall slip of a man, with his hair all down his back, and decorated with whiskers, beard, and mustachios, made her appearance. I advanced to welcome my Adalgisa, but without making any attempt at a return of my salutation, she glanced all round the room and merely said, "Come fa caldo qui! Non c'è nessuno ancora? Andiamo a prendere un caffé," and taking the arm of the hairy man retreated forthwith. Then came Signor Gallo, leader of the band, then the tenor, who could have gained the prize for unwashedness against 'em all—and after half-an-hour more waiting, Adalgisa and the hairy one returned, and after about half-an-hour more arrived my bass, and, God bless him, he came clean!

"We then went to work. Adalgisa could think of nothing but her dog, who kept up a continuous plaintive howl all the time we sang, which she assured me was because it liked the band accompaniment better than the piano, as it never made signs of disapprobation when she took it to rehearsals with the orchestra. She also informed me that it had five puppies, all of which it had nursed itself, as if Italian dogs were in the habit of hiring out wet nurses. . . ." And again—

"I can remember her describing to us one of these performances, and her enjoyment of the long folds of drapery as she flew across the stage as Norma and how she added with a sudden flash, half humour, half enthusiasm: 'I have everything a woman could wish for, my friends and my home, my husband and my children, and yet sometimes a wild longing comes over me to be back, if only for one hour, on the stage again, and living once more as I did in those early adventurous times.' She was standing in a beautiful room in Park Place when she said this. There were high carved cabinets, and worked silken tapestries on the walls, and a great golden carved glass over her head—she herself in some velvet brocaded dress stood looking not unlike a picture by Tintoret."

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CHAPTER III

PENCIL DRAWINGS OF PLANTS AND FLOWERS

1850–1860

No attempt at an appreciation of Leighton's art would be complete were it not to include, and even accentuate, the distinct value of the exquisite drawings of flowers and leaves which he made in pencil and silver point between the years 1852 and 1860.[1] As regards certain all-important qualities these studies are unrivalled. I was well acquainted with the drawings Leighton made for his pictures during the last twenty-five years of his life, and I had oftentimes heard Watts express an unbounded admiration for these; but when, looking through the portfolios of early drawings after Leighton's death, I came upon these exquisite fragments in pencil, it seemed that I had found for the first time the real key to the inner chamber of his genius. As reproductions of the beauty in line, form, and structure—the architecture, so to speak, of vegetation—nothing ever came closer to Nature revealed by a human touch through a treatment on a flat surface.

On December 22, 1852, Leighton writes to his mother from Rome: "I long to find myself again face to face with Nature, to follow it, to watch it, and to copy it, closely, faithfully, ingenuously—as Ruskin suggests, 'choosing nothing and rejecting nothing,'" and it is in this spirit that he set to work when he filled sketch-books with exquisite studies of the flowers and plants he loved best. These records of

[1] See Appendix, Vol. I., description in Preface to "Catalogue of the Leighton House Collection."

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the joy with which Nature filled his artistic temperament are to some more truly sympathetic than his elaborate work, for the reason that, while enjoying their beauty, we come in contact with the pure spirit of Leighton's genius unalloyed by any sense of intellectual effort. In his diary, "Pebbles," on August 21, 1852, Leighton writes: "Of the Tyrolese themselves, three qualities seem to me to characterise them, qualities which go well hand in hand with, and, I think it is not fanciful to say, are in great measure a key to, their well-known frankness and open-hearted honesty. I mean Piety, which shines out amongst them in many true things, a love for the art, which with them is, in fact, an outward manifestation of piety, and which is sufficiently displayed by the numberless scriptural subjects, painted or in relief, which adorn the cottages of the poorest peasants . . . and last, not least, a love for flowers (in other words, for Nature), which is written in the lovely clusters of flowers which stand in many-hued array on the window-sills of every dwelling. The works of all the really great artists display that love for flowers. Raphael did not consider it "niggling," as some of our broad-handling moderns would call it, to group humble daisies round the feet of his divine representation of the Mother of Christ. I notice that *two plants*, especially, produce a beautiful effect, both of form and colour, against the cool grey walls; the spreading, dropping, graceful *carnation*, with its bluish leaves and crimson flowers, and the slender, antlered, thousand-blossomed *oleander*." No exact name has ever been given to the special creed of the artist's religion; to that condition of the soul which Socrates in Plato's *Phædrus* declares has come to the birth as having seen most of truth together with that of the Philosopher, the Musician, and the Lover. The artist penetrates further than others can, into the mysteries of Nature's marvels as revealed through the eye, and he therefore comes in closer

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union through the sense of sight with the spirit of the artist of the infinite, and can gauge better the immeasurable distance which exists between Divine and human creation, and this is felt more distinctly, more reverently, when the artist simply copies Nature than when his own dæmon is taking a part in the inspiring of his inventions.

Leighton writes to his mother when he first reaches Rome in 1852: "I wish that I had a mind, simple and unconscious, even as a child"; and we find the evidence in these studies by Leighton of plants and flowers that his wish, for the time when he was drawing them, was granted; no intellectual choice nor assumption of scholarly theories have taken part in their achievement; they are spontaneous echoes of Divine creations when he was "face to face with Nature," and there is no reflection of any teaching but hers. Nature and her child have been alone together. The results are unalloyed expressions of the joy he felt in pure impersonal revelations of beauty. They are distinguished because elemental, recording the birth of the ingenuous response of a human spirit to a superhuman perfection of workmanship. When in such union of spirit with Nature, the artist-soul enters his most sacred shrine. An ecstatic joy is kindled by wonder, admiration, adoration, from which joy is inspired a peremptory impulse to endeavour to reproduce in his human handicraft the marvels of creation. Such experiences result from instinctive inevitable conditions, and, coming from the illumination of genius, belong to a higher level than that on which the intellect works;[1]

[1] An artist who was a great flower lover, when relating her experiences, maintained that it was in the revelation, to her perceptions, of the infinite perfection of the structure and form of one flower, that she had realised in her own nature a more intimate recognition and response to that of the Creator of the Infinite than had ever been elicited by any church services or creeds, or even, in fact, by the most sublime scenery. In one small flower she had found an epitome of the wonders and beauties of all creation, so focussed as to be grasped closely, and responded to, from the innermost intimate recesses of her nature with a joy unspeakable.

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no temptations of the personal dæmon simmer behind and distort the pure vision of Nature, provoking suggestions which are human of the human—the desire to excel, the ambition to be first, the love to display individuality. That inner life, the very core and most vital meaning of Leighton's being, the life that held revelry with all Nature's beauty, had been enraptured through the pure innocent loveliness in the flowers. Take, for instance, the page where he has *explained* the cylcamen he found at Tivoli in October 1856, and take a cyclamen, the real flower, and dissect it. What precious work we find: the ribbed calyx spreading out from the satin sheen of the stalk to clasp the bulbous swelling at the root of the petals — brilliant like finest blown glass, each calyx fringed round with emerald green flutings — inside straw colour dashed with brown speckles, all this triumph of minute finish just to start the sail-like petals of the flower itself. What reverence and enthusiasm was excited in Leighton as he pored over such things is vouched for by this page (and others similar of different flowers), exquisite portraits of every view of the clycamen; faint notes in writing recording the colours which his pencil failed to do.

Referring to his journey through the Tyrol, in 1852, Leighton writes: "I had been dwelling with unwearied admiration on the exquisite grace and beauty of the details, as it were, of Nature; every little flower of the field had become to me a new source of delight; the very blades of grass appeared to me in a new light."

Not only his artistic temperament, but also circumstances, had guided Leighton's instincts into the worship of beauty —beauty such as can be conceived alone by the artistic temperament—as the divinest element in creation and one to be reverenced beyond all others; and when "face to face" with Nature, having no desire but to record that reverence

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STUDIES OF CYCLAMEN. Tivoli, October 1856
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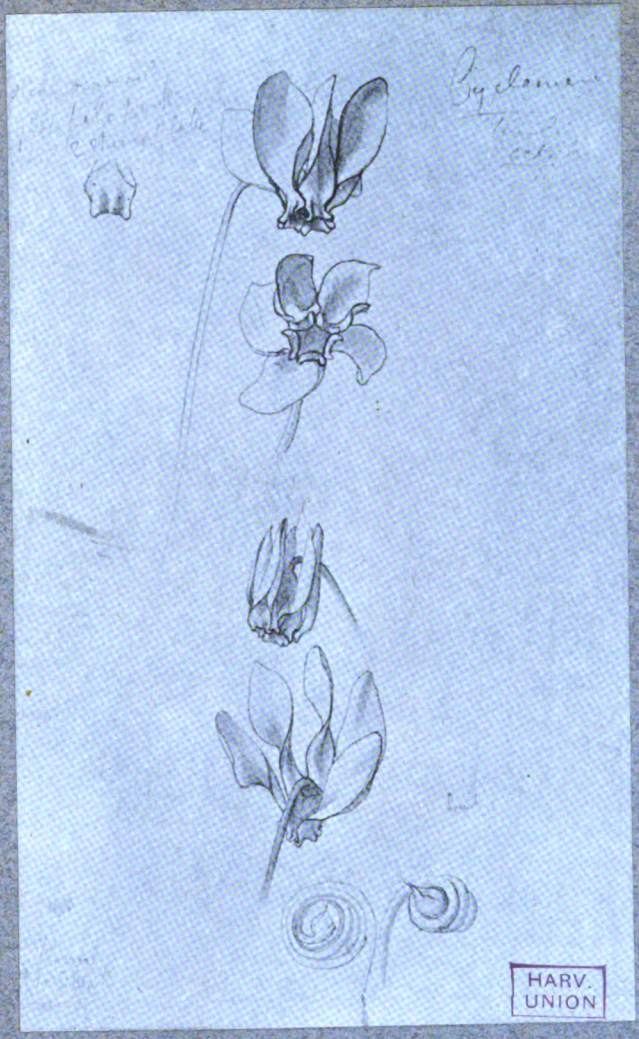

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WREATH OF BAY LEAVES

Drawn at the Bagni di Lucca, 1854. Leighton House Collection

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and worship "ingenuously," he made these incomparable drawings. They were done solely for the sake of the joy he felt in doing them, and Leighton certainly never expected any recognition of their beauty by a future generation. Stray leaves from a sketch-book have been collected and preserved in the Leighton House Collection, having been extracted from a mass of old dusty papers. On these pages are exquisite pencilled outlines of cyclamen, of a crocus, of oleander flowers, of a bramble branch, of sprays of bay and of plants of the agaves. They are dated the year after Leighton's great success, 1856, the year of his failure. In 1854, when he spent the summer at the Bagni di Lucca, he drew studies of bay-leaves twined into a wreath and festoons of the vine (see List of Illustrations and design on cover). Three days after Leighton's death, in a letter to *The Times* from one who knew him, a reference was made to this visit to Lucca.[1] This old acquaintance, who was then seeing him daily for three months, writes, "He was the most brilliant man I ever met." It was this brilliant entity, this attractive personality, who spent hours over drawing the flower of a pumpkin and of a "*faded pumpkin.*" Professor Aitchison records how he found Leighton at work over this drawing.[2] The celebrated "Lemon Tree," to which Professor Aitchison refers, and of which Ruskin also writes,[3] though the most renowned of Leighton's drawings of plants, and doubtless a *tour de force*,—a wonderful achievement,—has not, I think, the same perfection of charm which many of the earlier, less complete studies possess.[4] The sketch of a portion of a

[1] See Appendix, Vol. I., Preface to "Catalogue of the Leighton House Collection."

[2] See Appendix, Vol. I., "Lord Leighton, P.R.A., Some Reminiscences."

[3] Appendix, Vol. I.

[4] Ruskin was mistaken in thinking that the "Lemon Tree" and the "Byzantine Well" are of the same date. The former drawing was made in 1859, the latter seven years earlier in 1852 (reproduced facing page 80), and is referred

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deciduous tree[1] is perhaps a greater triumph in draughtsmanship than even the "Lemon Tree," because the foliage has a frailer and less definite aspect, and is yet reproduced with an absolute certainty of outline. The "Lemon Tree," drawn at Capri in 1859, was done for a purpose. Leighton had a feeling that the pre-Raphaelites ought not to have it all their own way on the score of elaborate finish and perfection in the drawing of detail. My first introduction to the "Lemon Tree" was on an occasion when Leighton and I had had an argument respecting the principles of the pre-Raphaelite school. He fetched the drawing from a corner in his studio, and, while showing it to me, said words to the effect that it was not only the pre-Raphaelites who reverenced the detail in Nature, and who thought it worth the time and labour it took to record the beauty in the wonderful minutiæ of her structure. If sufficient pains were taken, any one, he maintained, who could draw at all ought to be able to draw the complete detail of every object set before him. But, for the very reason that the "Lemon Tree" was done with a further purpose than the mere joy the beauty of Nature excited in Leighton's æsthetic senses, there is not, I think, quite the same convincing charm in this drawing as in some other more fragmentary studies.

In considering this early work by Leighton, it should be borne in mind, that in those years when it was executed, photography had not yet given the standard of a finish and perfection in actual delineation which outrivals every record made by human hand and eye. Photography has, in these later years, given the proportion and detail in beautiful architecture, the form of trees, plants, and flowers, their exquisite delicacy of structure, their grace and intricacy of line: all this

to in his diary, "Pebbles." I think this is the most beautiful drawing of the kind I have ever seen.

[1] See List of Illustrations.

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STUDY OF LEMON TREE. Capri, 1859
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STUDY OF DECIDUOUS TREE

Leighton House Collection

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has been secured and pictured for us by the camera; and, up to a certain point, very precious and truthful are these memoranda of the aspects of nature and art. Many of us remember the days when enthusiastic disciples of the wonderful new art of photography prophesied that no other would soon be needed, and that the draughtsman's craft would before long cease to exist. And further, they maintained it only required the discovery of a means to photograph colour for the painter's art also to be demolished. Artists, however, knew better. What was valuable in the records of photography, and what was of most intrinsic worth in the records created through means of the human hand and eye, were absolutely incomparable quantities. The treatment of nature in a photographic picture, however admirable and complete, must always be lacking in the evidence of any preference, reverence, or enthusiasm —in the sacred fire, in fact, which inspires the draughtsman's pencil and the painter's brush. Photography is indiscriminate; human art is selective, and is precious as it evinces and secures a choiceness in selection. However truthfully a photograph may record beauty of line and form in nature, it inevitably also records in its want of discrimination any facts which may exist in the view photographed; these counterbalance the effect of such beauty, and mar the subtle impression of charm which scenes in nature produce on a mind sensitive to beauty.

As the vision of the artist which attracts this feeling for beauty focalises itself in the sight, he naturally perceives but vaguely any other objects before him; therefore, the facts inspired by such preference become accentuated, and all their surroundings subordinated to it. For this reason, also, what is called, somewhat erroneously, the sculptor's sense of line and form—the sense applying equally to the treatment of line and form on a flat surface as in the round—is not so obvious in a photograph as in a good drawing. The eye of

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one possessing a gift for drawing transmits to the brain the structure of an object, not only as it is outlined against other objects, but also as the different planes of which it is formed recede or advance, slant one way or another, curve or straighten. To a truly gifted draughtsman, such as Leighton, there is an absorbing interest in working out the forms of the objects he sees which delight his sense of beauty,—of guiding his pencil so that it echoes on the paper the gratification with which his senses are inspired through his artistic perceptions. The result will be—that the drawing he produces almost unconsciously accentuates what has delighted him most in the objects he is depicting, and, explaining further than does even an actual copy by photography the element of beauty which has inspired him, carries with it also an inspiring effect on the spectator: the drawing will have something in it which affects us as a living influence, an influence which the most perfect of photographs can never possess. The actual perspective may be absolutely correct in the photograph—so may be the placing on the paper of every turn and twist in a bough or a leaf as regards their outlines; but compared to a beautiful drawing we feel the want of mind behind it: no human sense has revelled in the intricacies of growth and foreshortening, no human eye has traced the exquisite grace and sweep of the curve and the happy spring of the shoot alive with uprising sap. Just that accentuation which unwittingly creeps into the human touch, denoting that the construction of the form has been perceived and appreciated with delight, is lacking. The line of a pathway rising up on the sweep of an upland, a line which is always so fascinatingly suggestive, does not lead you farther over the hill in a photograph as it does in a little woodcut by William Blake. Just that push and movement is wanting in the sense of the line which in a really fine drawing gives it a living quality. Another shortcoming is caused by the inevitable flattening of tone in a photograph.

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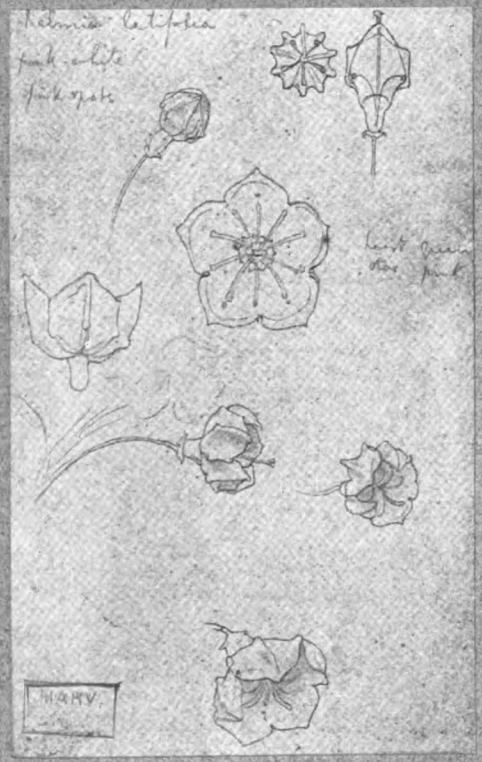

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EARLY STUDIES OF KALMIA, OLEANDER, AND RHODODENDRON FLOWERS

Leighton House Collection

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The brightest light does not detach itself, the darkest spot, to some degree always, even in the best print, is merged in the general shadow.

The idea that photography could supersede the art of the draughtsman soon exploded. Artists have used photography—some intelligently, as did Watts—many unintelligently. The illegitimate use of photography, the endeavour to make the lens do the work which alone the human eye and hand can effect, was seen in lifeless portraits, painted partly from the sitter, partly from a photograph. It is natural that any genuine artist should rebel against such cheapening of his art; and the deadening effects of relying on photography "to help you out" have brought about the result that the qualities in art which are furthest removed from those which it has in common with photography have been forced to the front, and the grammar of drawing, the groundwork of nature's structures which the human hand and the photographic lens can both record, has ceased to be considered as all-important. In Leighton's work this grammar was in itself developed into a fine art. By comparing any sketch he made of a leaf or of a flower with a photograph of the same, this will be evident to any eye that can appreciate grace and quality in drawing.

The latest phase of using photography to help out the drawing is found in some modern illustrations where the lens has found the outline, the right placing of the scene on the paper, the right proportion and perspective in buildings, and the general light and shade of the scene for the illustrator—the human hand only coming in to give breadth of effect, to undo the tell-tale finish of the photograph, and to make it into what is called "a picture" on the lines of a Turner or a Whistler.

All these were unknown ways in Leighton's youth, and to the end of his life he could make no use whatever of photography in his work. He took a kodak with him once on his

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travels, but the results were amusingly negative. "From the moment an artist relies on photography he does no good," was a statement I heard him make. Leighton believed in no short cuts. Enthusiasm, labour, sacrifice, renouncement, —these, and these alone, he maintained, can secure for the artist a worthy success.

There are those who would define genius by describing it as the faculty for taking infinite pains. But obviously genius is in itself a power, born of inspiration, which so completely overmasters all other conditions in a nature, that no labour nor time is taken into account so long as the impelling force obtains utterance. The inborn conviction in a nature that it has the power to create, demolishes all impediments which come in the way to hinder this power from stamping itself into a form. The necessity of taking infinite pains is but the natural and inevitable consequence of the burning desire born, who knows how? in the spirit of those who are blessed with genius, and the faculty to discern how best to develop it. Leighton, by reason, perhaps, of the very spontaneity of his own gifts, and also of his extreme natural modesty, allied to the conscientiousness with which he carried out his feeling of duty towards his vocation, was apt to lay more stress on the necessity for taking pains than on the necessity of possessing the real source of his power of industry. He saw too often the fatal results of artists depending on talent to achieve what only talent allied to industry can perform, for him not to accentuate the all-importance of unceasing labour. He wrote to his elder sister with reference to one of these fatal results: "I have not seen that young man's recent work, neither do I hunger and thirst thereafter; twenty-one years ago, or more, his parents brought me a composition of his—it justified the highest hopes—it was very ambitious in its scope (though the work of a child), and the ambition was

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STUDY OF A FADED FLOWER OF PUMPKIN. Rome, 1854
Leighton House Collection

STUDY OF FLOWER OF A PUMPKIN. Meran, 1856
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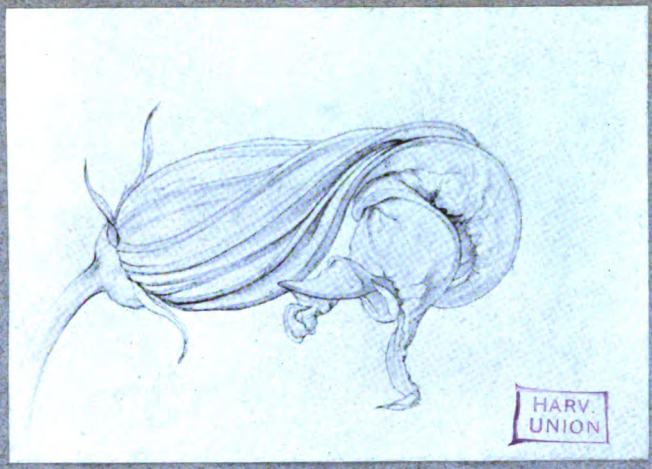
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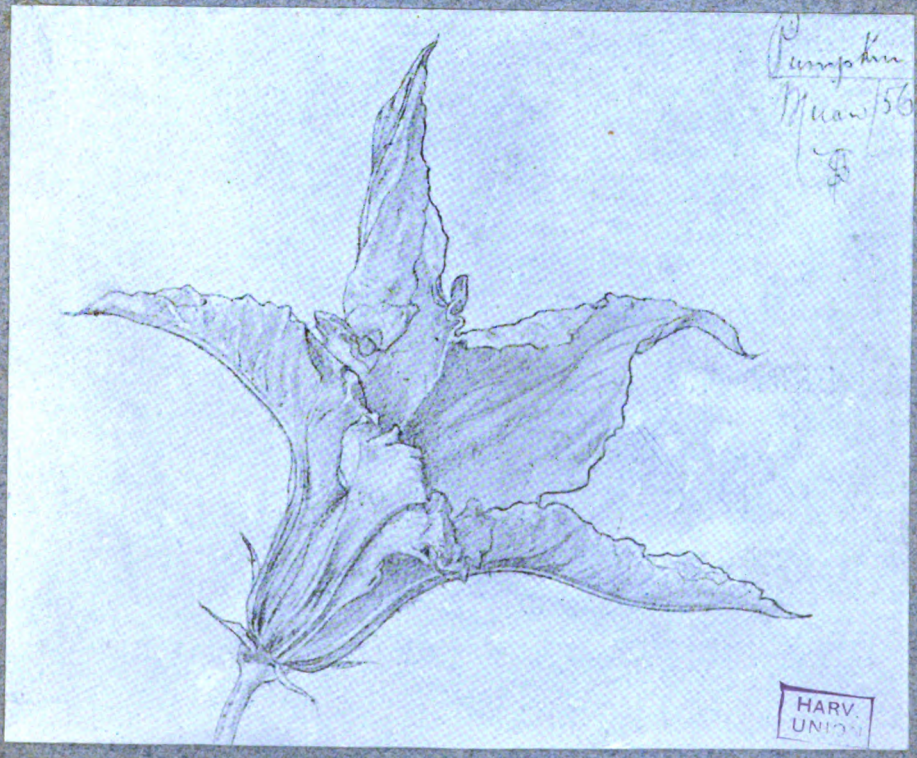

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STUDIES OF BRANCHES OF VINE. Bagni di Lucca, 1854
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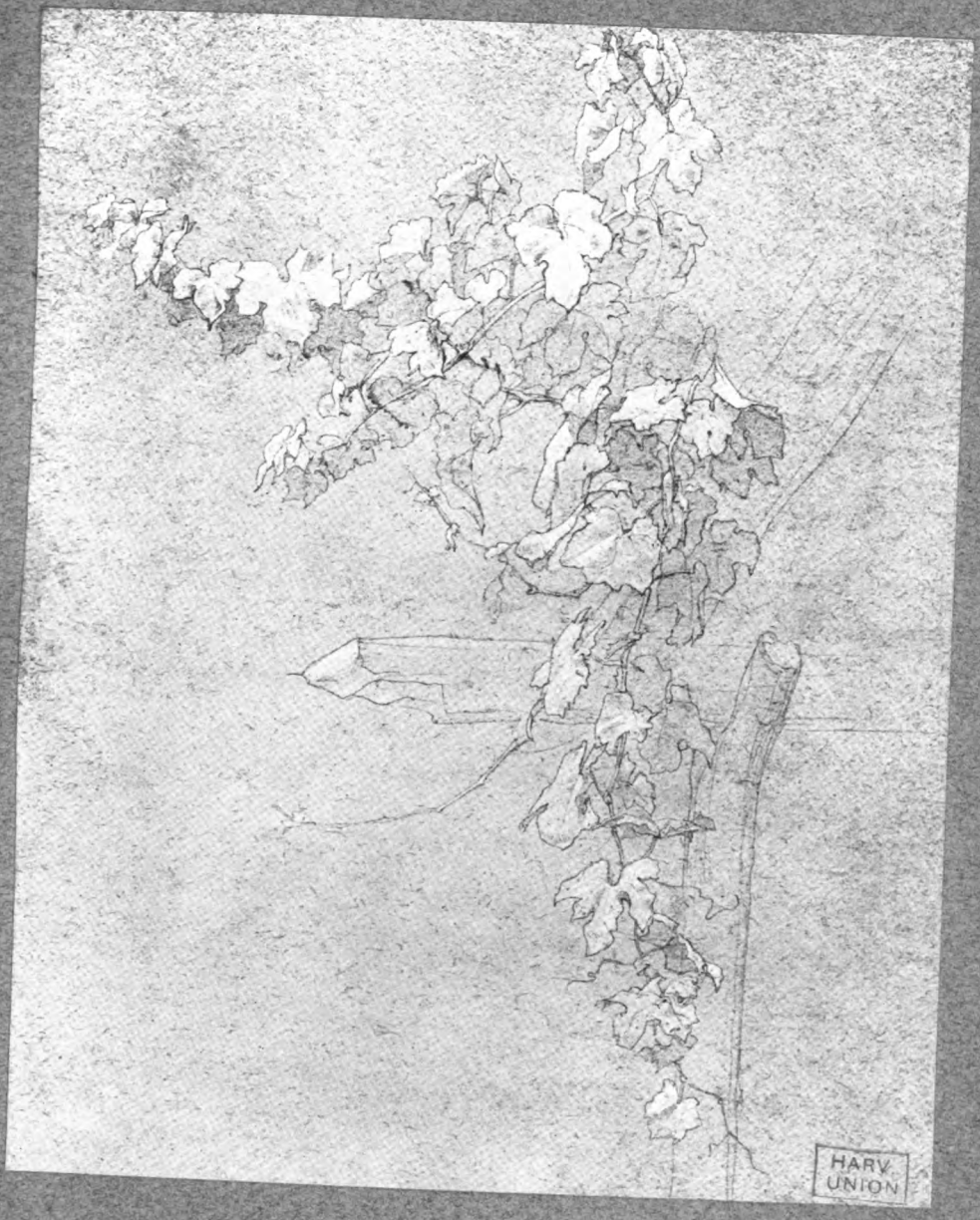

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BRANCH OF VINE, Bellosquardo, Florence, 1856
Leighton House Collection

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justified in the ability it displayed. Nothing that I could have done at his age approached it. I told his parents so. He ought now to have been a very considerable artist, to say the least—he no longer even *aims!* He told me a year or two ago that he had *ceased to design!* He paints portraits, and twists a little moustache under an eyeglass. He is *nothing*, as far as the world knows, and I doubt whether he is hiding himself under a bushel. I fear vanity and idleness have rotted out his talents. It is a strange and a sad case. I often quote it (without names) to those who show precocious gifts." His attached friend and fellow-Academician, Mr. Briton Rivière, writes of Leighton:—

"I have always believed that his ruling passion was Duty—the keenest possible sense of it; to do anything he had to do as perfectly as possible, and to be always at his best. He was evidently a believer in Goethe's maxim that 'an artist who does anything, does all.' In his own work, in what concerned his colleagues and the outside body of artists, in fact in everything he did. Nothing easily or passively done satisfied him; but in every case the decision and action were brought by care and work—if possible, executed by himself; and no pressure of time or labour ever made him escape such personal trouble, or caused him to transfer it to the shoulders of another. This temper of mind was shown even in small matters, which so busy a man might well have left for others to do. I think it sometimes injured his own work as an artist, because, though a great artist can never be evolved except by years of patient work and strenuous effort to do his very best always, yet, on the other hand, it is often the happy, easy work and absolutely spontaneous effort at the moment by such a hand which is his very best. Such happy, easy work probably Leighton would seldom allow himself to do, and never would leave at the right moment, but would still strive to make better and more

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complete. He must still elaborate it and try to make it more perfect; and this it was which made his old friend and enthusiastic admirer, Watts, sometimes say "how much finer Leighton's work would be if he would admit the accidental into it."

I remember once casually remarking to Leighton how much easier writing was than painting. He answered quickly but seriously—quite impressively: "Believe me, nothing is easy if it is done as well as you can possibly do it." This was Leighton's creed of creeds. Whatever genius or facilities an artist may possess, he must ignore them as factors in the fight. He must possess them unconsciously—the whole conscious effort being concentrated on surmounting difficulties, not on encouraging facilities.

To return to the subject of this chapter. It would be obviously unreasonable to attempt to compare slight studies of plants and flowers, however precious, with finished important works of art such as "Cimabue's Madonna," "A Syracusan Bride," "Daphnephoria," "Captive Andromache," "The Return of Persephone," or, in fact, with any of Leighton's well-known paintings—or indeed with those masterly studies of the figure and draperies in black and white chalk, drawn for his pictures, or when he was seized with the beauty of an attitude while his model was resting. These, though executed in a few seconds, are true and subtle records of the perfection in the form and structure of the human figure, proving the existence of a knowledge and of a sense of beauty which Watts declared were unrivalled since the days of Pheidias. The later masterly studies of landscape in oil-colour which formerly lined the walls of his Kensington studio, in which can be so truly discerned the distinctive colouring and atmosphere of the various countries where they were painted, also are greater as achievements than the pencil drawings. Nevertheless, when studying Leighton's

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genius with a view to gauge rightly its power and also its limitations, it is, I maintain, essential to take into account these direct studies from Nature, made with the object solely of following, watching, and copying her faithfully, ingenuously, "choosing nothing and rejecting nothing," but into which crept unconsciously the undeniable evidence of his native gifts. As proofs of spontaneous power in the quality of his genius, they refute much unjust criticism which has been hurled at Leighton's art since his death. Sir William Richmond wrote[1]:—

"That term of abuse and of contempt, trite now, on account of the mannerism of its constant adoption by ephemeral critics, and sometimes adopted by poorly equipped artists, 'academic,' has been most unjustly, in its derogatory sense, applied to Leighton's art.

"In point of fact, it is academic, but only in the good sense of being highly educated, very scientific, and restrained. And in that sense it is a pity that there is not more of such academic art. The bad sense, wherein such criticism is applicable, being justly advanced towards work that displays no inspiration, no originality, that is correct and commonplace, balanced without enthusiasm, adequate without reason, and accurate without good taste in the choice of beautiful and expressive gestures, forms, and colours, and is preoccupied and narrow."

It is probably the restraint, the science, the high education in Leighton's finished pictures which have provoked unsympathetic critics to endeavour to demolish Leighton's reputation as a great artist. To these, such qualities would seem to deny the existence of any sensitiveness, any spontaneity in his art. They have asserted that it is cold, dry —academic. For the reason that science, calculated effects, style, and high education—qualities rarely found in modern

[1] See Appendix, Vol. I.

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English art—are evident in Leighton's pictures, they conclude that the painter is possessed of no intuitive genius. They take essentially a British, a non-cosmopolitan standpoint from which to preach. They do not take into account the standard towards which Leighton was ever aiming. He may not have attained the goal towards which he worked, but the nature of that goal should be understood and recognised before any criticism on his work can pass as intelligent and just; and these exquisite drawings of flowers and plants come to our aid in confuting sterile estimates of Leighton's art, which deny any other elements but those which can be acquired by painstaking and teachable qualities. Here are records of Nature complicated by no intellectual choice, no academic learning, no results of high education; and what is the result? an undeniable evidence of the finest, most tender sensitiveness for beauty, resulting in a complete and perfect rendering of the subtlest forms of growth. When "face to face" with Nature, Leighton's æsthetic emotions were keen enough and all-sufficient to create these perfect records, as later in his life he created unrivalled drawings of the human figure in even more spontaneous and certainly more rapid strokes of his pencil, and landscape sketches which prove undeniably his gifts as a colourist; but it may be questioned whether his æsthetic emotions had as great a *staying* power as those qualities of heart and brain which made Leighton a great man, independent of the position he held as a great artist. His sensibilities were of the keenest; the agility and vitality of his brain power were quite abnormal. As Watts wrote, a "magnificent intellectual capacity, and unerring and instantaneous spring upon the point to unravel." It seemed, however, that this vitality and agility did at times run away with that more abiding strength of æsthetic emotion which impregnates the very greatest art with a serenity, a sublime atmosphere,—

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"ARIADNE ABANDONED BY THESEUS; WATCHES FOR HIS RETURN. ARTEMIS RELEASES HER BY DEATH." 1868

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"EIRIA RAISING THE SON OF THE SHUNAMMITE." 130

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"ELISHA RAISING THE SON OF THE SHUNAMMITE." 1881

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"DÆDALUS AND ICARUS." 1869

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an emotion which denotes a mood in which the artist has been steeped throughout the creation of a work, from the first moment he conceives it to the moment when he puts the last touch to the canvas, and affects the actual manipulation of the pigment. The above criticism applies only justly to certain of Leighton's works. In many of his paintings the poetic motive which inspired their invention,—their mental atmosphere,—governs the achievements throughout, though doubtless these works also would have had a more convincing effect as art had the surface possessed a more vibrating quality. Among those pictures in which form, colour, tone, and expression are completely dominated by their poetic meaning are "Lieder ohne Worte," a lovely, though youthful, work; "David;" "Ariadne," a picture little known, but in some respects perhaps the most poetic Leighton ever painted; "Summer Moon" (Watts' favourite Leighton), "Elisha Raising the Son of the Shunammite," "Winding the Skein," "Music Lesson," "Antique Juggling Girl," "Dædalus and Icarus," "Helios and Rhodos," "Golden Hours," "Cymon and Iphigenia," "The Spirit of the Summit," "Flaming June," "Clytie" (unfinished).

No aspect of his own work was a secret from Leighton. No one knew better than he did his own limitations, or why it was necessary to keep himself in hand by methods of procedure in his painting which he could guide by his ever present intellectual acumen. He wrote to his father on March 2, 1855, having just completed the two pictures, "Cimabue's Madonna" and "Romeo": "You ask for *my* opinion of my pictures; you couldn't ask a more embarrassing and unsatisfactory question; I think, indeed, that they are very creditable works for my age, but I am anything but satisfied with them, and believe that I could paint both of them better now. I am particularly anxious that persons whom I love or esteem should think neither

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more nor less of my artistic capacity than I deserve—*the plain truth;* I am therefore very circumspect in passing a verdict on myself in addressing myself to such persons; I think, however, you may expect me to become eventually the best draughtsman in my country."

A biographer's obvious moral duty is to aim at presenting impartially "the plain truth," following Leighton's lead in not desiring to give either a more or less favourable view of his capacities as an artist than they deserve. On May 7, 1864, Leighton writes in a letter to his father and mother: "I had a kind note this morning from Ruskin in which, after criticising two or three things, he speaks very warmly of other points in my work and of the development of what he calls 'enormous power and sense of beauty.' I quote this for what it is worth, because I know it will give you pleasure, but I have *not* and *never shall have* 'enormous power,' though I have some 'sense of beauty.'" Leighton remained ever far from being contented with his own work. "I alone know how far I have fallen short of my ideal," he says, many years later, to the old acquaintance of the Lucca days. He had studied under the shadow of the great masters; and though never an imitator even of the greatest,[1] he had set himself a standard of supreme excellence, more easily approached under the conditions in which artists worked in the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries than it possibly could be in those of the nineteenth. With respect to his power of draughtsmanship and his natural sense of beauty, Leighton knew his place was among the greatest. His appreciation and love of colour were also far keener than those possessed by the average artist. He felt nevertheless that he lacked the inevitable and

[1] See letter to Steinle, page 188: " . . . God forgive me if I am intolerant; but according to my view an artist must produce his art out of his own heart, or he is none."

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"CAPTIVE ANDROMACHE." 1888

The Corporation of Manchester

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STUDY IN COLOUR FOR "CAPTIVE ANDROMACHE." 1888

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continuous force which alone gives "*enormous power*" and ease to the craftsman, when he deals with work on a large scale, and which carries with it the absolutely convincing effect of the world-renowned art of the past. Realising that the "enormous power" was not there because the ever conclusively propelling force was lacking, perhaps owing partly from the want of robust health, and also doubtless from the scattering of his powers in many directions to which he was drawn by a sense of duty, Leighton, in working out the designs of his large pictures, clung all the more resolutely to the exercise of that system which he had adopted, and which many of his friends—Watts and Briton Rivière among the number—thought tended to cramp his genius. He was not sufficiently sure of himself to admit the "accidental" into his work.

Some critics have, however, gone beyond the mark in emphasising this characteristic of Leighton's methods. One writes: "Deliberateness of workmanship and calculation of effect, into which inspiration of the moment is never allowed to enter, are the chief characteristics of the painter's craftsmanship. The inspiration stage was practically passed when he took the crayon in his hand; and to this circumstance probably is to be assigned the absence of realism which arrests the attention." This statement is contrary to many which I have heard fall from Leighton's own lips. He constantly drew my attention to the fact—a fact on which he laid great stress, and of which many models were witnesses—that he *invariably* recurred to Nature in the later stages of his pictures, in order to imbibe renewed inspiration from the source of all his æsthetic emotions—Nature. Any one who carefully studies Leighton's pictures will find evidence of this in the works themselves, in the accessories no less than in the principal figures. During the exhibition of some thirty of Leighton's finest paintings at Leighton House in 1900, I

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was daily more and more impressed by the fact that the final touches in those pictures had been inspired by the actual subtlety of Nature's aspects, and transmitted to the canvas by the artist direct from the objects before him without conscious calculation. Very obviously was this the case not only in the principal features of the design—the countenances and the hands and feet of the figures—but in such details as the flowers, fabrics of draperies, carpets, mother-of-pearl inlaying, found (for instance) in "A Noble Venetian Lady," "Summer Moon," "Sister's Kiss," "Weaving the Wreath," "Winding the Skein," "The Music Lesson," "Atalanta." In all these pictures exists the internal convincing evidence contradicting the statement that "the inspiration stage was practically past when he took the crayon in his hand." This, however, did not obscure in some of Leighton's large finished pictures undoubted evidences of arrangements and calculated effects, which are not overruled by an art which conceals them, by the art which disguises art,—the clenching force of the inevitable. The beauty of line, the grouping of masses, the "composition" evident in the posing of the figures—admirable and unlaboured as all these arrangements are—not infrequently lack this convincing sign of the inevitable. It is too obvious that they have been chosen by the intellectual taste of their maker. When Goethe was expatiating on Shakespeare and comparing his genius with his own, he said, as a proof of his own inferiority, that he knew well how every word was made to come in its place, but with Shakespeare they came without Shakespeare knowing.[1] Leighton, like Goethe, was conscious that his genius could

[1] "I remember hearing him (Wordsworth) say that 'Goethe's poetry was not inevitable enough.' The remark is striking and true; no line in Goethe, as Goethe said himself, but its maker knew well how it came there. Wordsworth is right; Goethe's poetry is not inevitable; not inevitable enough."—Preface to "Poems of Wordsworth," chosen and edited by Matthew Arnold.

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"WEAVING THE WREATH." 1873

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"WINDING THE SKEIN." 1880

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"MUSIC LESSON." 1877

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not vie with the greatest in the world—the genius he was able to appreciate as Goethe did Shakespeare's; but he also knew, as did Goethe, exactly the place his own art ought to take; he knew that in his sense of style—which, in its true meaning, is the echo of Nature in her choicest, noblest moods,—in his sense of the beauty of the human structure, in his power of draughtsmanship, his work was superior to that of any of his contemporaries in England. The fact of the greatness of Leighton's powers in some directions challenges a comparison between his work and that of the giants of old who possess enormous power in all directions. No one knew so well as did Leighton the place he must take when he entered the lists with the giants: "I have *not* and *never shall have* 'enormous power.'" He writes in 1856 from Paris to his Master, Steinle:—

Translation.]

PARIS, RUE PIGALLE 21.

MY GOOD AND DEAR FRIEND,—Accidentally I had an idle morning when I received your dear letter, and therefore answer it immediately. With your usual modesty you put aside all that I say of goodness and love, but I repeat it unweariedly. Steinle, my good Master, if in this insincere world I have an unfeigned, pure feeling, it is my warm gratitude and love for you; and the time when I bloomed, gay and full of hope, in your garden will light me through life like a sunny spot in the past; and I yield myself to this feeling the more confidently, since I *know* that I am under no delusion in it. I have fairly strong insight, and know exactly what I owe to you, and for what I have to thank nature; I can already appraise my moderate natural gifts; but I know also that these gifts received *through you alone* the impression of *taste* that can alone make them effective, and that in your hands they were refined as in a furnace. An English painter seldom lacks fancy and invention, but *taste*, that which forms and embellishes the raw material, *that* is almost always wanting with us—and it is you I must thank for the *little* I possess.

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To flatter was an impossibility with Leighton. He paid every artist the respect of believing he desired the same sincerity shown in the criticism of his work that he,—Leighton,—wished when his own was judged, and with which he judged it himself. A remarkable feature in his character was the power he had of retaining so secure a hold on his own standards of excellence without for a moment losing his individual self-centre, yet at the same time possessing that of entering sympathetically into the view of other artists—a view often quite contrary to his own —and generously acknowledging every merit that could by any possibility be extracted from their work. Mr. Briton Rivière writes: "The intensity of his own personal belief was well known to himself. He once said to me, in reference to a clever picture which he greatly admired for some of its qualities, that he could not really enjoy it, owing to its careless drawing. On another occasion, when at Mr. Russell's sale I had bought a very vigorous study by Etty, and Leighton was quite enthusiastic about its colour and painting, he said, 'But I could not bear it on my wall, with that drawing,' and he laughed at himself for this strictness, and said, 'I know that I am a prig about drawing.' However, not only did this never blind him to the claims of another kind of art, but I think he was even more keen to recommend for approval the work of any school of painting for which, personally, he had no particular liking or sympathy. 'It is not whether you or I like it, but what it is on its own merits,' was a favourite warning of his to any rapid opinion expressed on a picture. To any one intimately acquainted with his own real views and opinions it was sometimes surprising to find how well he realised the intentions, and put himself in the place, of some artist who had produced something very foreign to his own point of view, and quite repugnant to his beliefs. This is not a

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common quality among artists, whose critical tolerance is often in an inverse ratio to the firmness of their own particular creed of art faith; and it was one of the many qualities which marked Leighton out as so admirably fitted for the Presidency."

Leighton was, undoubtedly, an absolutely competent critic of his own art; and the fact that his principles had been inspired by a spontaneous and sincere reverence and admiration for the creations of artists whom time has crowned as the greatest in the world, and that with his critical faculty he perceived in what measure he had succeeded in following in their steps, enabled him to gauge with absolute justice the merits and shortcomings of his own work, compared with that of his contemporaries. Whatever those shortcomings were, certain it is that they did not arise from an absence of those natural gifts which are the outcome of emotional sensitiveness, nor from a want of intense feeling for the beauty of Nature, nor from a poverty of invention. The theory that his art was solely the result of his having an abnormal power of industry and of taking pains—a theory which has been advanced many times since Leighton's death—cannot hold good for a moment with those who impartially study his work from the beginning of his career. The spontaneity of the impulse to produce in every born artist is described in the following passage from Leighton's first discourse, when President, to the students of the Royal Academy, December 10, 1879, and the description is obviously drawn from his own personal experience: "The gift of artistic production manifests itself in the young in an impulse so spontaneous and so imperative, and is in its origin so wholly emotional and independent of the action of the intellect, that it at first and for some time entirely absorbs their energies. The student's first steps on the bright paths of his working life are obscured by no shadows save those cast by the difficulties

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of a technical nature which lie before him, and these difficulties, which indeed he only half discerns, serve rather to whet his appetite than to hamper or discourage him; for his heart whispers that, when he shall have brushed them aside, the road will be clear before him, and the utterance of what he feels stirring within him will be from thenceforward one long unchecked delight. This spirit of spontaneous, unquestioning rejoicing in production, which is still the privilege of youth, and which, even now, the very strong sometimes carry with them through their lives, was indeed, when Art herself was in her prime, the normal and constant condition of the artistic temper, and shone out in all artistic work. It is this spirit which gave a perennial freshness to Athenian Art—the serenest and most spontaneous men have ever seen. And when again, after many centuries, another Art was born out of the night of the Dark Ages, and shed its gentle light over the chaos of society, this spirit once more burst through it into flame. All forms of Art are alike fired with it. Architecture first, exulting in new flights of vigorous and bold creation; then Sculpture; last, Painting, virtually a new Art, looked out on to the world with the wondering delight of a child, timidly at first, but soon to fill it with the bright expression of its joy. Those were halcyon days; the questions, 'Why do I paint?' 'Why do I model?' 'Why should I build beautifully?' 'What—how—shall I build, model, paint?' had no existence in the mind of the artist. 'Why,' he might have answered, 'does the lark soar and sing?'"

Though his direct study from Nature mostly took the form, in later years, of sketching in oil colour views in the different countries in which he travelled, Leighton showed to the end of his life his great delight in flowers by continuing to make sketches from them. In 1895, at Malinmore, he was fascinated by the sea-thistle, and there are four pages in a sketch-book devoted to rapid sketches of the plant,

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STUDY OF SEA THISTLE. Malinmore, Ireland, 1895
From Sketch-book

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Callantra Melimore /95

flowers perh. full
blue sapphire with
salmon colored
pistils (?)
green cup bauhsen

after flowers have fallen out

when flower falls all is
green then in gradation
to brown, finally dark
brown with light brown
spikes

leaves pret. rush green
with violet veins near
blossoms, then paler green
veins wrong, then gradually
yellower to pale
orange canary
transition, leaves
near blossom head flesh
colour tipped with
sapphire & violet
Stems greg streak
with violet brought
unity towards head
finally warm grey
streaked with pale
brown

sometimes
flecked with
warm grey
or bone brown

razor sharp light edge line
round all the leaves

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STUDY OF SEA THISTLE, Malinmore, Ireland, 1895
From Sketch-book

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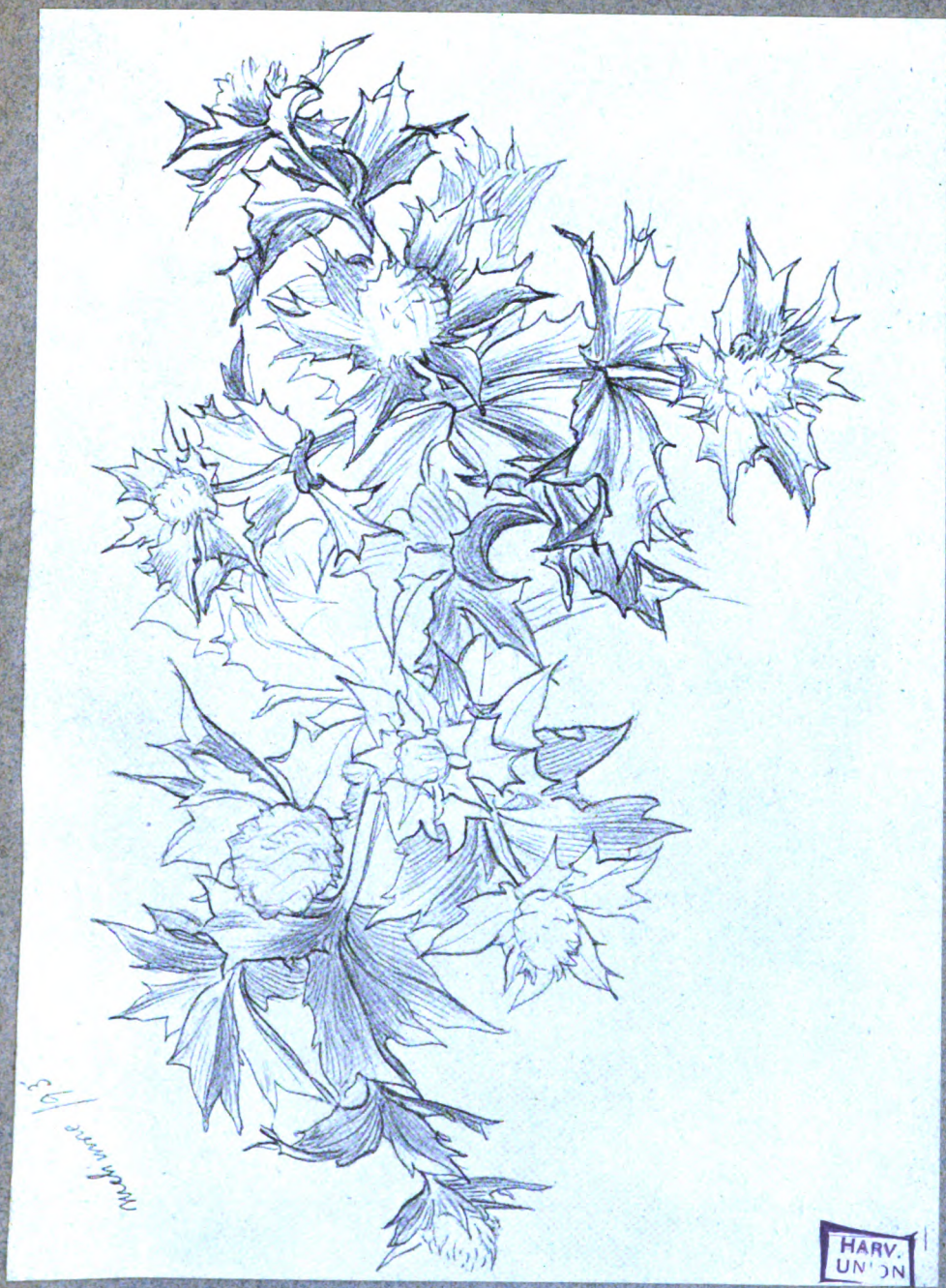

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callantra, which he made there. Notes are written on the first sketch indicating the colours. It is interesting to compare the early pencil work executed between 1850 and 1860 with that of forty years later. Though the handling may be different, there is the same complete sense and enjoyment of the wonderful architecture of plants and flowers obvious in both.[1]

[1] Knowing that Leighton was a frequenter of the Kew Gardens, I asked Sir W. Thiselton Dyer to write me his recollections of him, which he most kindly did in the following letter :—

KEW, *January* 11, 1906.

DEAR MRS. BARRINGTON,—My acquaintance with Lord Leighton was only beginning to ripen into intimacy when he unhappily died. His somewhat grand seigneur manner at first a little alarmed me ; but when I had broken through his reserve, I became, like every one else, much attached to him.

He used often to dine in evening dress at a small table behind a screen at the door of the coffee-room at the Athenæum. In the corner adjoining this is a round table known as Abraham's Bosom, as it was once frequented by Abraham Hayward. Here, on Royal Society days, we often had a lively scientific party. Leighton often found it impossible to keep aloof, and joined in the fun.

I found Sir Frederic, as he was called, was well known to our men as a visitor to Kew. He used to drive down in his victoria in the afternoon and take a solitary walk. I only myself came across him once. I had taken some trouble to get a fine show of the old-fashioned Dutch tulips known as Bizards and Byblomen. I found Leighton one day absorbed in the enthusiastic contemplation of them. There were certain combinations of colour which completely fascinated him. I remember that he particularly admired a purplish brown with yellow and a reddish purple with cream-colour. Both were, I think, in the "key" that particularly appealed to him. He was very anxious to have them in his garden in London, and we gave him a little collection, with directions how to grow them. What was the result I never heard.

I then suggested that, as it was a lovely spring day, I should take him a walk. He assented, and we sent his carriage round to the Lion Gate, nearest to Richmond. I took him through the Queen's Cottage grounds to show him the sheets of wild hyacinth. He admitted their beauty, but remarked that the effect was not pictorial.

That, I think, was Leighton's point of view. With an intense feeling for beauty, he had little or none for Nature pure and simple. His art was essentially selective, and I think he took most pleasure at Kew in the more or less artificial products of the gardener's art. What he sought was subtle effects of form and colour. Personally, I appreciate both ways of treating plants. I am always at war with artists for their undisciplined and mostly incompetent treatment of vegetation : drawing and anatomy are usually defective to an instructed eye, such faults would be intolerable in the figure. Their presence robs me of much pleasure in looking at Burne-Jones' pictures.

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I imagine he mostly made his plants up out of his head. Ruskin, with all his talk, was both unobservant and careless. Millais, on the other hand, though I am not aware that he ever had any botanical training, by sheer force of insight paints plants in a way to which the most fastidious botanist can take no exception. One can actually botanise in his foreground of "Over the Hills and Far Away," yet there is no loss of general pictorial effect. The plant drawing of Albert Dürer, Holman Hunt, and Alma Tadema, though more studied, is absolutely satisfying to the botanist. Sir Joseph Hooker has always complained that the Royal Academy has never given any encouragement to accurate plant drawing. Yet I have heard Sir William Richmond say that, as a student, he made hundreds of careful studies of plant-form, and that he knew no discipline more profitable. I remember remarking to an Academician that I thought that in this respect the competition pictures of the students reached a higher standard than that of the average May Exhibition, and he admitted that that was a possible criticism.

Leighton aimed at beauty by selection and discipline. Millais in his later work looked only to general effect and balance, but as to detail was content to faithfully reproduce, and did not select at all. This explains the admiration which I believe Millais had for Miss North's work. Both produced admirable results, but they were of an essentially different kind, though equally admirable.

But whenever Leighton introduced plant-forms, it was penetrated by his characteristic thoroughness and perfect mastery of what he was about. I am myself a passionate admirer of the Gloire-de-Dijon rose. I remember telling Leighton that I did not think that any one had ever painted it with such consummate skill as he had. I am told, and quite believe it, that his pencil studies from plants are as fine as anything that has ever been done.

Leighton rendered us a very great service on one occasion. Miss North's pictures were painted on paper, roughly framed, and simply hung by her on the brick walls of her gallery. They soon began to rapidly deteriorate. I appealed to L. for advice. I was, I confess, astonished to receive from him a full, precise, and business-like report, pointing out exactly what should be done, and who was the proper person to do it. The gallery was to be lined with boarding, the pictures were to be properly framed, cleaned, lightly varnished, and glazed. The report was at once accepted by the office of works, the work was successfully carried out, and no trouble has been experienced since.

In his turn, Leighton sometimes appealed to me. This was notably the case when he was painting his "Persephone," which I frankly told him I thought was the most beautiful picture he had ever painted. He had been in Capri, and had seen on the rocks a blue flower which he wished to introduce into the foreground. We made out what it was, and sent him tracings from plates and sketches from herbarium specimens. These did not satisfy him, and he ultimately sent to Capri for the living plant. He worked hard at it, and, I do not doubt, produced a very beautiful piece of colour.

That year I dined at the Academy. "Persephone" hung over Leighton's chair, and was the subject of one of the few really witty remarks I ever heard in an after-dinner speech. But then the speaker was Lord Justice Bowen.

But his beautiful foreground was all gone. Leighton, and I think he was right,

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"RETURN OF PERSEPHONE." 1891

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STUDY IN COLOUR FOR "RETURN OF PERSEPHONE." 1891

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thought it destroyed the balance of his colour scheme, and painted it out. But I have always felt sad to think of the beautiful work that lay buried there.

When he died, we felt very sad at Kew. He had always been so lovable and disinterested. We decided to send some tribute to his funeral, but to avoid what was commonplace. So we sent a large wreath of bay, introducing, in the place of the conventional berries, single snowdrop flowers. The result was dignified and, I think, adequate. At any rate, the Academicians thought so, if, as I have been told, they placed the wreath by the coffin on the hearse on its way to St. Paul's.

I walked back with Lord Redesdale, one of Leighton's most intimate friends, who had come up from Batsford to attend. There was a great gathering at the Athenæum. I sat next Millais, already himself stricken with death, and whom I never saw again.

I am afraid all this will not be very helpful to you, but my pen ran on to tell you all I could of a good, great, and brave man, whom it was an honour to have known.—
Yours always sincerely, W. C. THISELTON DYER.

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CHAPTER IV

WATTS—SUCCESS—FAILURE

1855–1856

It was in the summer of 1855, in consequence of his father having summoned him suddenly back to England, that Leighton first became known as a notable person to the London world. His picture of "Cimabue's Madonna" had preceded him, and gave him an introduction to the art magnates; while the fact that the Queen had bought it of the young and, till then, unknown artist, raised the curiosity of those to whom the intrinsic value of the work was insignificant, compared to its having received this mark of Royal approval. Hanging on the walls of the Academy throughout the season and being much talked about, the picture, combined with the painter's charming personality, won for him at once a prominent position. His friends of the happy Roman days, however, remained the nucleus of his real intimacies. As can be gathered from his letters, he had already in Rome felt general society to be fatiguing and unremunerative, the interest in it never having compensated him for the physical exertion and weariness it entailed. Health—and a more or less stolid temperament—are requisite in order to combat, with any satisfaction, the wear and tear of late hours, and contact with mere acquaintances and strangers whose personalities carry with them no special interest. Leighton found no pleasure in such intercourse sufficient to overbalance its sterility, for he possessed neither robust health nor much equanimity of temperament. He

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"CUPID WITH DOVES"

Decorative work with gold background. About 1880

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could enjoy with ecstasy those things which delighted him, but had little of that even current of patient contentment, the normal condition of those who can tolerate cheerfully—and even with pleasure—the herding in crowds with mere acquaintances. Circumstances combined in making Leighton's disinclination to indiscriminate visiting often misunderstood. His extreme vitality when in company, his notable gifts as a talker and as a linguist, the high social standing of many of his most intimate friends, naturally gave the impression that he was made for the sort of success which is the aim of many living in the London world. That he never availed himself of all the opportunities that offered themselves was considered by many as a sign of conceit and superciliousness. Nothing could have been farther from the truth. That he was ambitious for Art to take her legitimate position on the platform of the world's highest interests is certain, and that he resented the position which was but too often accorded in England to her earnest votaries, and had a keen discernment in tracing evidences of self-interest and snobbish proclivities in those who would have patronised him, is no less certain; but that Leighton himself was ever personally otherwise than the most modest of men, all who really knew him can attest. To whatever class in society a man or woman might belong, whether a Royal or a quite humble friend—once a friend, Leighton gave of his very best and worthiest. No time or trouble would he spare in such service; though he was too eager a worker, and felt too keenly a responsibility towards his calling for him to allow any moment of his life to be frittered away by claims which were not in his eyes real or of any serious advantage to others.

It was during this summer that he made the personal acquaintance of Ruskin, Holman Hunt, Millais, and Watts. While in London he found a home with his mother's rela-

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tions, Mr. and Mrs. Nash, in Montagu Square, for whose affectionate kindness he was ever grateful. It was while staying there that Watts and he first met, or rather on the pavement outside the house. Watts recounted how he had ridden one afternoon to Montagu Square, and having asked for Leighton, the artist himself came out to greet him. Watts was much impressed at the time, he said, by the extraordinary amount of vitality and nervous energy which Leighton seemed to possess. This acquaintance thus begun was continued for forty years.[1]

As regarded Art, the supreme interest in the lives of these two famous painters, their relations remained intimate to the end of Leighton's life. Before Leighton definitely settled in London, Watts invited him to show his work in the studios of Little Holland House, which invitation he gratefully accepted. In a letter to his mother Leighton writes: "Watts has been exceedingly amiable to me; the studio is at my disposal if I want to paint there. I am still of opinion that Watts is a most marvellous fellow, and if he had but decent health would whip us all, if he does not already."

It is interesting to trace the influences which developed alike in Leighton and Watts, the feeling for form which in both artists is analogous to that of the Greek. Before going to Italy, Watts had studied the perfection in the work of Pheidias in the Elgin Marbles, a perfection rediscovered by Haydon; and a visit to Greece later only confirmed his conviction that the Pheidian school of sculpture made a higher appeal to his artistic sense than did any other. That was "*the indelible seal*" which, in the case of

[1] Watts wrote at the time Leighton died that he had enjoyed an uninterrupted friendship with him of forty-five years. This was evidently a slight miscalculation. We read in one of Leighton's letters to his mother from Rome that Watts had called on him, but that he had missed seeing him, and Watts certainly spoke to me of this interview on the pavement of Montagu Square in 1855 as the first he had had with Leighton.

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his brother artist, had been stamped on Leighton's artistic nature through the guidance of his master, Steinle. When Watts lived in Italy, from the year 1843 to 1847, he found that it was the work of Orcagna and Titian that appealed most to his imagination, and to his sense of form and colour—Orcagna's great conceptions, which struck notes stranger and more widely suggestive than those dictated and restricted by special religious creeds; Titian, the glorious Titian of the Renaissance, whose sense and modelling had the breadth and bloom of Pheidian art, and whose colour was triumphant in qualities of richness and subtlety combined. The pure beauty in the early religious painters made a much slighter and less personal appeal to Watts during those four years he lived in Italy.

It was in Italy, when a child of twelve, that Leighton drank a deep draught from the fountain-head of mediæval and modern art; and this established once and for all the high standard towards which he ever aimed. But though his true artistic preferences were aroused at this early age, the full and complete passion for his calling was not developed till he met his master some years later in Frankfort. Belonging to the brotherhood of Nazarenes, the early religious Italian art appealed more strongly than any other to Steinle; and, doubtless, the earnest study Leighton devoted to Duccio, Cimabue, Giotto, Buonfigli, Perugino, and Pinturicchio, and the delight he took in their work, was originally started by Steinle. The following list, which exists in Steinle's handwriting, of the paintings which he wished Leighton specially to study in Florence is evidence of this.

Translation.]

FLORENCE

St. Croce.—The choir by Angiolo Gaddi, pupil of Giotto. The chapel on the right by his uncle, Taddeo Gaddi. The altar

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by Giotto himself, in the sacristy the Taddeo Gaddi, in the refectory the Last Supper, all by Giotto.

St. Marco.—Outside Fiesole, where particularly should be seen in the cloister-cell and choir-stalls a Last Supper by Ghirlandajo.

St. Maria Novella.—The choir by Domenico Ghirlandajo, chapel by Giovanni and Filippo Lippi, a Madonna in marble by Benedetto da Majano, the great Madonna of Cimabue. The Hell and Paradise of Andreas Orcagna. Opposite the court of this chapel grey in grey by Dello and Paul Ucello; from the court into the Capello dei Spagnolli, to the left the picture by Taddeo Gaddi; all the rest by Simon Memmi.

Capella di St. Francesco, by Dom. Ghirlandajo.

St. Ambrogio.—Fresco by Cosimo Rosetti.

St. Spirito.—Built by Brunelleschi; altar-pieces by Filippo Lippi and Botticelli.

Al Carmine, dei Massacio's.

St. Miniato.—Chapel by Aretino Spinello.

Palazzo Riccardi.—The lovely chapel by Benozzo Gozzoli.

In the Chapel of the Foundling Hospital.—Beautiful altar-piece by Ghirlandajo.

After visiting Padua, Siena, Perugia, Assisi, however, the pupil became a keen admirer of this early art, independently of any influence other than the inherent beauty, dignity, and purity of the feeling in the works themselves.[1] Moreover,

[1] In a letter from his mother, December 22, 1854, she quotes an extract from the *Morning Post*, written by a critic who had been visiting the studios in Rome, and who alludes to Leighton's sympathy with Giotto. It reads to-day as quaint and curiously antiquated as do Knight's scornful criticisms on the Elgin Marbles. Mrs. Leighton writes: "One sentence in your letter has set your dear father on the horns of anxiety. You tell us we are not to expect too much from your pictures, and remind us 'that the path which leads to success, &c. &c.' Now, Papa fancies that you had underpainted your canvas and were not satisfied with the result, and that was the cause of your writing less hopefully than usual. We have been wishing much to hear what your progress was; knowing the subject of each picture, we should have understood if you had reported progress. In case you are in want of a little encouragement, I must tell you the other day Papa enters the drawing-room with a radiant face. He held in his hand a piece of paper, and requesting my attention, he read me its contents, which I copy for you, and which I found were taken from a column in the *Morning Post* devoted to criticisms on artists

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the natural sympathy which Leighton felt for the art of Greece, discovered in this early Italian work records of her influence, and that, in a very striking manner, it was allied to that of the great ancients. In his Academy address of 1887 we find this alluded to in the following passage:—

"The production, both in sculpture and painting, of the middle period of the thirteenth century has a character of transition. In painting, the works, for instance, of Cimabue and of Duccio are still impregnated with the Byzantine spirit, and occasionally reveal startling reminiscences of classic dignity and power, to which justice is not, I think, sufficiently rendered. In sculpture, the handiwork of Nicolo Pisano is full of the amplitude, the rhythm, and virility of classic Art. I see in it, indeed, the tokens of a new life in Art, but little sign of a new artistic form—it is not a dawn; it is an after-glow, strange, belated, and solemn.

and their works chiefly, I believe, on the Continent, but of that I am not quite sure. 'I next called on Mr. Leighton, who is employed on a canvas of many feet. His subject is'—then follows the description, after which he adds: 'Mr. Leighton will become a great artist if he advances as he has begun. His drawing is admirable, much better than that of English artists generally. Some of the figures are Giottoish in the treatment of the drapery, which is scarcely pardonable, because drapery fell flowingly about the human body in Giotto's time as well as now. Why imitate the uncomfortable line of that conventional rag? It is, however, unfair to judge of anything beyond drawing and composition in the present state of this picture, which is an extraordinary work for so young a man.' Remarks more or less favourable were made on several other artists, but nothing like what you have just read. Do you know this critic? I need not tell you how highly we appreciate this gentleman's sagacity; but jokes apart, Papa was rather puzzled at such a criticism about the drapery of some of the figures, because you excel in such folds, so it seems to us odd that you should skimp any of your figures. The same column contains observations on the subject of 'High Art' and large historical pictures, or rather comments on those made by young students, such indeed as I have heard you make, that I could almost have fancied the author was answering your remarks. We were rather startled to read in your letter that you find you had better not use the interests of a professional man to facilitate the admission of your picture into the Exhibition of the Royal Academy, but trust to its merits for that result, as we are told the Exhibition in question is, strictly speaking, a private affair for the works of the members only and such as they choose to admit, which explains perhaps the complaints of rejection one has read of from time to time. I hope your picture may be kindly judged and well hung."

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In the Art of Giotto and the Giottosques, the transformation is fulfilled. It is an art lit up with the spirit of St. Francis, warm with Christian love, pure with Christian purity, simple with Christian humility; it is the fit language of a pious race endowed with an exquisite instinct of the expressiveness of form, as form, but untrained as yet in the knowledge of the concrete facts of the outer world; an art fresh with the dew and tenderness of youth, and yet showing, together with this virginal quality of young life, a simple forcefulness prophetic of the power of its riper day. Within the outline of these general characteristics individuality found sufficient scope."

Even when this transformation is fulfilled in the frescoes of Giotto, any intelligent study of his art at Padua and Assisi, while keeping in mind the manner in which Pheidias felt and treated the human form in his sculpture, would prove to the student how distinctly visible is the link between the ancient and this mediæval art; though the fact of the latter being fired with an ecstasy of spiritual emotion of which the Greek had no experience, may disguise the link where feeling in art is of more interest than form. There is the same detachment of one form from another, each being given its full expression and intention—which induces a feeling of simplicity and serenity in the greatest work. The form of the head is not smudged into the throat, nor the throat into the chest, nor the chest into the arms. Even in the smallest Greek coin or *intaglio* of the best period this separate individuality of form in each part of the human frame is accentuated, and with it a sense of size and breadth. The same fundamental principles also, adhered to by the great Greek workmen in their treatment of drapery, is to be traced in the work of Giotto.

But the great Greeks did not invent the beauty they immortalised, any more than did Leighton and Watts; the Pheidian school intuitively chose the noblest form it found

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"IDYLL" 1881

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PORTRAIT OF MISS MABEL MILLS (THE HON. MRS. GRENFELL). 1877

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in nature.[1] The notable gift with which nature endowed the artists of the Periclean epoch consisted of eyes to perceive, and taste to *prefer*, the form which, intrinsically and most convincingly, inspires admiration in those imbued with the finest sense of beauty—not a gift to invent something new and different from nature. In like manner the gift nature bestowed on Leighton and Watts was the same, a perception and a preference for noble form; and in this choice they had been educated by legacies from Pheidias and his school, but only so far as these legacies induced them to seek and perceive in nature herself the elements of such nobility. In painting the magnificent head and shoulders entitled "Atalanta,"[2] or the reclining figures in "Idyll,"[3] Leighton copied as directly from nature as when he painted the portrait of "Miss Mabel Mills,"[4] where a similar beauty of form in the throat existed as in Miss Jones, who sat for "Atalanta" and "Idyll." When Watts painted his superb "Lady with the Mirror," one of his really great achievements, it was the model before him whose beauty he was recording, though his own sense in recognising it had been further inspired by his study of Pheidias. We need not go out of England to find types which are as completely noble as are those in the most inspiring art ever created, but the sense as a

[1] On a first visit to Athens I was struck by the extraordinary insignificance and want of beauty in the Levantines of mixed race who crowded the streets; nowhere seemed there a trace left among the inhabitants of the town of the type of Greek beauty. When travelling a few days later to Colonna, while the train stopped at a station on the lower slopes of Hymettus, I saw two men hurrying through the adjacent olive groves to catch it. They were dressed in the Greek costume of the provinces—an embroidered waistcoat cut low leaving the throat bare, the short white plaited skirt, and the heavy cloak falling from one shoulder. Either of these men might have sat to Pheidias for the Theseus. Both were more magnificent in form than any statue ever made. Doubtless, in the days of her ancient glory, Greece contained a far larger proportion of inhabitants who were beautiful than are to be found now; nevertheless Pheidias without a doubt had to exercise his gift of selecting the best, no less than did Leighton and Watts.

[2] See List of Illustrations. [3] Ibid. [4] Ibid.

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rule is wanting in English artists to select and to prefer such nobility.

Leighton writes to a friend in 1879:—

"I have just remembered a circumstance which might be worth mentioning: I painted pictures in *an out-of-door top light* and with realistic aims (of course, subordinate to style) in the old Frankfurt days before I came over here, and long before I heard of 'modern' ideas in painting. In this, perhaps, more than in anything, the boy was the father of the man, for it is still the corner-stone of my faith that Art is not a corpse, but a living thing, and that the highest respect for the old masters, who are and will remain supreme, does not lie in doing as they did, but as men of their strength would do if they were now (oh, *derisim!*) amongst us."

Leighton taught Watts to appreciate the Greek inheritance to be found in early Italian art; and I have frequently heard Watts comment on the evidence of this legacy in Giotto's work. Watts, by ventilating the results of his studies of Pheidian art with Leighton, and analysing the elemental principles on which it was grounded, aided his brother artist in securing a faster hold on the sources of his individual preferences.

No two characters could have been more dissimilar than those of Watts and Leighton, no two men could have led more different external lives; Leighton's great and varied gifts requiring for their full exercise the whole area of life's stage, Watts' genius demanding seclusion, and days undisturbed by friction with the outer world. Watts' first and great object in life was to preserve his work, and to bequeath it to his country, which he, happily for his country, was enabled to do; Leighton's object was to complete a work as far as industry and his gifts would enable him to complete it, then —as he would say—"to get rid of it and never see it again; but try to do better next time"! The one was frank, free,

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"VENUS DISROBING FOR THE BATH." 1867

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"PHRYNE AT ELEUSIS." 1882

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courageous; the other almost morbidly self-depreciative, sensitive, and timid. All the same, no two workmen could have had more sympathy with one another in their true aims and aspirations, or more mutual admiration for each other's artistic gifts.

Watts, to his credit, had from his first acquaintance with Leighton discerned that "the unusual position" which Leighton undoubtedly held from his first appearance in the London world to the day of his death, was due to the possession of unusual gifts, exercised in a very unusually generous and public-spirited manner, and not to reasons invented by those who were envious of this prominent position.

Watts wrote to Leighton after they became neighbours in Kensington:—

"I have been worrying myself by fancying you rather misunderstood the drift of my observations respecting the value of social consideration to a professional man, that I meant to imply you sold your pictures in consequence of the unusual position you undoubtedly hold; knowing me and my opinions as you do, you could hardly think so, yet poets and artists are proverbially sensitive beings. I know I am myself to a degree that could hardly be imagined, though not with regard to opinion of my work; I am resigned, if not contented, to preserve what I can do for posterity, conscious that no other judgment can really be worth anything; I am very often unhappy, thinking that after all the best I can do may not be worthy of being brought before the great tribunal at all; but I do not allow myself to brood over the subject more than I can help. However, I do not attempt to deaden the keen dread I have of giving pain or offence, and am really miserable when I think I have done so, or been unjust; I don't think I am often the latter, but I may by clumsiness fall into the former regrettable position. I should grieve indeed if any word or deed of mine should ever be offensive to you, for you know me to be always yours most sincerely, SIGNOR."

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Immediately on his arrival from Italy Leighton paid a visit to his family at Bath, arriving on May 24. He returned to London shortly after, where his family joined him on June 15, and the introduction so long desired by Leighton took place between his parents and sisters and his great friends, Mr. and Mrs. Sartoris. In December 1854 Leighton's mother had written: "How delightful to see you again, and perhaps we may spend the next winter together, but of that I am uncertain. In England we shall not be, and both Papa and I incline to Paris, but Gussy has an anxious desire to go to Berlin. The Sartoris' being in Paris would be a strong inducement to us to go there, as we very much wish to make your friends' acquaintance, and we should most likely meet at their house agreeable people. I am exceedingly sorry I overlooked Mrs. Sartoris' friendly message, which I have since discovered in your former letter. Pray offer her my best compliments, and assure her I consider her great kindness to you gives her a claim upon my sympathy, and I shall rejoice to have an opportunity of giving her this assurance in person."

In February his mother wrote: "I hope you will not long be separated from your friends the Sartoris when you leave Rome. We all sincerely desire to become acquainted with the valued friends of whom we hear so much."

Later his father wrote: "With regard to your reasons for remaining at Rome during the spring, you have this time at least the best of the argument. If there were no other than your wish to give more tangible form to your gratitude to your kind friends, the Sartoris, it would be sufficient, to say nothing of the drawings from M. Angelo and Raphael."

And in the same cover his mother says: "I feel, with your father, great satisfaction at your undertaking a likeness of Mrs. Sartoris—I hope it may prove a satisfactory one.

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PORTRAIT OF MRS. ADELAIDE SARTORIS

Drawn by Lord Leighton for her friend Lady Bloomfield, 1867

By permission of the Hon. Mrs. Sartoris

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Give our love to Mrs. Sartoris." Leighton's younger sister kept a diary in those days. Written in this are notes which describe the keen appreciation which she and her family felt for her brother's friends. "In fact she is, as Fred says, an angel. She seems very fond of him, as she might be of a younger brother. . . . She is very stout, high coloured, and has little hair. But the shape of her mouth is very fine, the modulations of her voice in speaking are exquisite. She is a creature who can never age, and before whose attractions those of younger and prettier women must always pale." "August 1855.—Fred returned to Bath to stay with us a little while. Beautiful drives together. So generous in giving me several volumes of poetry." "Sept.—Left us to go to Paris."

While in London Leighton wrote the following to his master, Steinle:—

Translation.]

10 MADDOX STREET, BOND STREET,
LONDON, 1855.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,—At last I am able to write to you again. When I sent off my last letter to you I was busily packing for my journey; now I have been already six weeks in England, and it seems a year since I left Rome. I scarcely need tell you, dearest Friend, that at first, in this London hurly-burly, I hardly knew whether I was standing on my head or my heels: I will not say that this condition has not had a certain charm. I have made several acquaintances, have been cordially received, and have had considerably more praise for my picture than it deserves. However, I have already set seriously to work again, and expect shortly to commence upon a new composition. It is a real grief to me, dear Master, to have to work without your guidance.

My *succès*, here in London, which, for a beginner, has been extraordinarily great, fills me with anxiety and apprehension; I am always thinking, "What can you exhibit next year that will

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fulfil the expectations of the public?" When I have settled anything definitely, I shall report to my master in Frankfurt.

Now, however, as regards the photographs. Owing to unforeseen circumstances, Mrs. Sartoris (whom I introduced to you in my last letter) was obliged to alter the plans of her journey, and will not leave this for Germany until the middle of September. What now? Will you wait so long, or shall I seek an opportunity to send you your seven things?

And now, my Friend, how are you occupied? Do you still sparkle with beautiful inventions? Tell me all that you are doing. I had a delightful surprise recently when I saw your long expected "Court Scene" in Paris; it is a charming composition. I tell you nothing of the great Paris Exhibition, for you naturally will not neglect to see a thing so excessively interesting; it throws light upon a great many things. If only you could come in September! then we could meet again and renew old times a little; it would be very delightful. I should like extremely to arrange something of the kind with you; we should certainly agree very well.

Remember me most kindly to your wife and my old friends in Frankfurt, and keep in mind your loving pupil,

FRED LEIGHTON.

In a letter to his mother, before she arrived in London, Leighton refers to Ruskin's criticism when comparing his "Cimabue's Madonna" to Millais' "Rescue":—

LONDON.

I do wonder at the critics: will they never let "the cat die"? What Ruskin means by Millais' picture being "greater" than mine, is that the joy of a mother over her rescued children is a higher order of emotion than any expressed in my picture. I wish people would remember St. Paul on the subject of hateful comparisons: "There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars, for one star differeth from another star in glory."

I spent last night an evening that Gussy would have envied me. We (I and the Sartoris and one or two others) were at Hallé's, who is the most charming fellow in the world.

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STUDY FOR PORTION OF FRIEZE, "MUSIC" (not carried out in final design). 1883
Leighton House Collection

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Having sent his "Romeo" picture to Paris, Leighton was not quite unknown to the art world when he arrived there in September 1855. The "Cimabue's Madonna," hanging on the walls of the Royal Academy in London, and this picture being shown at the great International Exhibition in France, he can fairly be said to have entered at the age of twenty-four the arena where he competed with the first artists in Europe. By a mistake the "Romeo" picture was hung in the Roman instead of the English section in the International Exhibition. The following extract appeared in a publication at the time, and gives the unbiassed criticism of one who was unknown to Leighton:—

"Strange it may seem, but such is the fact, that of the thirteen canvasses she (Rome) has sent on this occasion to sustain her credit, that which for intrinsic merit takes the lead—in which soul for expression and true artistic feeling are conspicuous, is due to the pencil of an Englishman—Frederic Leighton, *né à Scarborough, élève de Mons. Edouard Steinle de Frankfort.* The subject of this picture—and it is a fine one—is the reconciliation of the Houses of Montagu and Capulet over the bodies of Romeo and Juliet. Let us hope that his native country may hear and see more of so promising an artist as Mr. Leighton."

And again:—

"When these lines were written on the other side of the Channel, Mr. Leighton had already sent his 'pencil's' first representation to the Royal Academy, causing therein not a little surprise, fluttering the dovecots in Corioli. We beg he will construe our sincere anticipations into a hearty welcome."

In the early days of September 1855, Leighton was in Paris preparing to settle in for a winter's hard work. The following letters to his mother and father and to Steinle were written soon after his arrival. In that to Steinle, Leighton

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alludes to the serious work he has before him, in painting "The Triumph of Music":—

HÔTEL CANTERBURY, RUE DE LA PAIX,
Sunday, 1855.

DEAREST MAMMA,—Though I have, of course, nothing to tell you yet, still, as it is Sunday morning, I send you a few lines as a token of continued vegetation. Paris is bright and warm and sunny, and contrasts incredibly with the murkiness of London. I have already set to work to look for a studio, but shall have great difficulty in finding one, and shall have to pay about 1500 francs per annum *unfurnished;* my furniture I shall of course hire, not buy—*ci vuol pazienza.*

HÔTEL CANTERBURY,
Saturday, 1855.

DEAR PAPA,—When one has bad news to swallow, there is nothing like taking the bull by the horns and engulphing the dose at once: this is the bull to be swallowed, horns and all. I have, after great trouble and manifold inquiries, taken *the only* studio that at all suited me, and for that I give *unfurnished* 150 francs a month. It is enormous, but unavoidable; nor have I been at a disadvantage from being an Englishman, for two artists of my acquaintance, one a *Parisian* just returning from Rome, the other a Frankfurter, have seen precisely the *same*, and only the same, studios as I did. It is the dearth of studios and the great demand for them that makes the price so high. Those who have had studios some time of course pay very much less, others put up with little holes far too small to paint a picture of any size. Carlo Perugini is painting in the studio of a friend, and that is a strip not large enough for one person. There was only *one* studio which I could for a moment think of besides this one I have taken, and that costs infinitely less; but not only was it too small—it had been built *this* summer, and is not yet finished painting, feels cold and damp, and would no doubt have laid me up with the rheumatism.

I have been advised and actually assisted in everything by Hébert, who is a friend as well as an old acquaintance, and than whom nobody knows the resources of Paris better. He

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took me about to get my furniture, &c., and I am happy to say that I have bought everything, including ample bedroom and table linen, crockery, and knives, spoons, &c., all under £30. I have quite a little *fond de ménage;* this is the only cheap thing I have done in Paris, everything is exactly as dear as London. It certainly *is* lucky I sold my picture.

My frame cost, with time and trouble of exhibition, 320 francs.

[Portion of letter to his father.]

21 RUE PIGALLE, *Tuesday.*

I have nothing whatever to tell you, except that I have just finished a head of Carlo Perugini (for myself), which is the best thing of the kind I ever did. It has not interfered with my picture, but has stopped up unavoidable gaps. I have got H. Wilson[1] to teach me the Conture Method—*à fin d'avoir taté à tout.* Conture paints well in spite of his method, which might easily lead to superficial mannerism. The best *dodge* is to be a devil of a clever fellow.

Will you do me a *great* favour—for my friend Hébert, to whom I am under great obligations? If you can get me for him *any* Greek classic (if Homer, all the better) in the *same edition* as my *Brumek's Anacreon* with *Latin notes,* I shall be much obliged. Hébert wants very much to have any such work.

Translation.]

21 RUE PIGALLE, PARIS,
Saturday, September 29, 1855.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,—At last I find the long-desired opportunity to send you the photographs; our old Gamba has undertaken to convey them to you. How I envy him the pleasure of seeing you again, dear Master! You, on your side, will certainly have great pleasure in seeing your old pupil again. He is just the same as ever; rather more of a beard, and broader shouldered, but still quite the old Gamba. He will be able to tell you that we have cherished your memory with love and reverence, and are always proud to call ourselves your pupils.

I should like to describe to you what I am painting now,

[1] Mr. Herbert Wilson.

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but the subject I have chosen is such an absolute matter of sentiment, that your imagination might well paint something quite different, in comparison with which my picture might subsequently suffer; I would rather wait until I can send you a photograph. It is a picture with only four figures, but life-size. I stand in alarm before the blank canvas. One learns gradually to understand that one really can do nothing.

The photographs in the portofolio with my writing on them are yours; I hope they will please you. You must accept them as a little memento of my Italian hobbledehoy-hood.

Remember me respectfully to Madame Steinle, to my other friends "tante cose."

Keep me in remembrance.—Your grateful pupil,

FRED LEIGHTON.

Again to Steinle he writes:—

PARIS, RUE PIGALLE 21.

No one could sympathise better than I with your melancholy loneliness in the hermitage of Frankfurt; in that air an artist breathes with difficulty; I confess I should be entirely paralysed by the lack of models and other resources in Frankfurt; one all too easily loses sight of the infinite importance of a complete material representation, which is always the special mark of the *artist;* I often see with amazement how even quite clever people behave in this respect. It has quite a plausible sound if one says (such a fellow as Strauch, for example), "Away with materialism! Pfui! The great artist is he who has the most ideas!" Stop, my little man! do you not feel what a store of artistic cowardice lies behind your words? Ah, behind so broad a shield you can elude all the difficulties of your work! He who has the most *ideas* is first only as the greatest *poet* or even *philosopher!* He only is an *artist* who can *set* his ideas *forth. Art* means the power to do; undoubtedly the idea is the source, the achieved is art; but an *idea* completely *embodied* can no more exist without the *artist* power than a thousand ideas that are only muddled away by agitated incapacity!

I gladly let myself go on such matters to you, for I know that we are of one mind regarding them, and it does one good to pour out one's heart a little for once.

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I hear, with particular interest, that you are painting the little picture of the Madonna that you composed twenty-three years ago in the diligence when you were travelling to Italy; it is a very good thing. I imagine a lovely landscape in the background; an oleander, rich in starry bloom; grey olives and stately cypresses wave in the distance; soft violets nestle on the bank of the cool water, and gaze with earnest eyes out of the whispering grass. On the still bosom of the stream sleep white blossoms, which have flown down when the winds breathed on the limes, and see, in a secret nook in the shade of the lovely *Himmelsglocken*, the strawberry bed from which the black-eyed John will peep at the treasures. Above, in the branches, many-coloured birds frolic, and chase one another, and flit through the grove in harmonious, song-rich flight. And the Madonna! how tenderly and lovingly she looks down upon the two playing children! Have I described your picture?

In order to send it to England (and how delighted I should be to see it) you should, so much I know from personal experience, cause your picture to reach the Royal Academy (without fail) on the first of April; I believe that influence is no use at all, for the Academicians are very autocratic; I will, however, obtain all the information in good time. I, who was even more totally unknown in England than you, have refrained, by the advice of my friends, from applying to *any* person, and have left my pictures entirely to themselves.

Now I must close this immoderately long letter. It seems not impossible to me that I may pass through Frankfurt next spring, then we will have a good long gossip together, won't we?

Till then, keep in warm remembrance your English pupil,

FRED LEIGHTON.

It is clear that Paris lacked the charm which Italy had for Leighton. Parisians have been compared to the Greeks with respect to the peculiarly *fin* and agile manner in which they can exercise their intellects; and so far Leighton might have been expected to fit in happily and with enjoyment to himself into their life. But though he felt a great respect

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and admiration for the genuine artistic sense which the French undoubtedly possess as a nation, Leighton, no less as a man than as an artist, was more Greek than is any typical Parisian. He viewed the beauty of nature from a less circumscribed standpoint, his emotions were excited with a more ingenuous spontaneity and less from a *parti-pris* attitude than, as a rule, are those of the French artist. Paris was too artificial to appeal strongly to Leighton's taste. As with the Greeks, grace and charm in the form of living as in Art was a necessity to his well-being; but he found more natural expression of such grace and charm in the unsophisticated Italian than among the artificial and more highly finished manners of the Parisians. We never read of the eager longing to be in France that Leighton's letters show when it was a question of a return to Italy. Also Paris does not appear to have suited his health. He writes to his mother after living there some weeks:—

21 RUE PIGALLE, *Sunday*, 21.

DEAREST MAMMA,—I observe in a general way that the climate of Paris is very exciting to my nerves—infinitely more than Rome. The life I lead is one of unprecedented regularity and absence of any kind of excess, yet sometimes in the evening, when I have lit my lamp and my fire and sit down to work, I can neither play, nor read, nor draw, nor do anything for five minutes together for sheer restlessness and fidgets. That sleep, too, that used to be the corner-stone of my accomplishments and the pillar of my strength, is not by any means what it was—*non sum qualis eram!*

The Sartoris have not changed their plans more than five or six dozen times since you saw them. They are now staying in the country with the Marquise de l'Aigle, Edward's sister. They will be here at the beginning of November and stay *three* months—ooray! Lady Cowley is, I believe, not yet come back. I see a great deal of Herbert Wilson here. He has with him, too, an arch-brick of a friend, a naval captain whom I like most particularly. I am painting his head for practice and for him—he is a fine specimen of an English sailor.

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SKETCH IN WATER COLOUR FOR TABLEAUX VIVANTS,
"THE ECHOES OF HELLAS."
Leighton House Collection

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About learning by heart, don't you think it will be a great waste of my very little eyesight to read the same thing over and over again until I know it?

21 RUE PIGALLE, *October* 26.

My health, to return to the eternal refrain, is just what it was. I shall find very little difficulty in giving up coffee or tea after dinner, as I never take either; indeed, of late I have given up wine, beer, gin, and other spirituous liquors as utterly exciting and damnable. Nothing makes me sleep as I used except going to bed late, and as I am always either sleepy, tired, or fidgety in the evening, I very seldom get beyond ten o'clock.

Carlo Perugini, whom I saw to-day, sends "tante cose" to his cousin. He is a charming boy, most gentlemanlike, and has that peculiar childlike simplicity which belongs to none but Italians.

Leighton's friendship with Brock and the French sculptor Dalou began in these autumn days of 1855. He also made the acquaintance of Whistler, whose etchings he admired greatly. The work of Jean François Millet also delighted him no less than that of Corot.

His sister's diary contains the following notes: "November 25.—We arrived at Paris. Our dear, handsome Fred was here to meet us. December 1.—Fred comes to see us daily, though sometimes only for five minutes. He is pale and coughs a good deal; it makes us uneasy. He often comes to dinner. Presents to us on New Year's day. Took me to the Conservatoire. Always generous. We went often to Mrs. Sartoris in the evening."

It was in Paris that Leighton probably first enjoyed to the full the culture of his instincts for the drama. Mr. and Mrs. Sartoris remained in Paris during the winter and spring, and Mr. Henry Greville arrived there on February 28th, 1856.

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Extracts from his published diaries give a picture of the *milieu* in which Leighton's hours of relaxation from work were spent:—

27 RUE DU FAUBOURG ST. HONORÉ,
Saturday, March 1, 1856.

I left London on Thursday with Flahault and Charles, and after a smooth passage slept at Boulogne and came on here yesterday. After dining *tête-à-tête* with the excellent doctor (the Hollands dined out), I went to Adelaide Sartoris', where I found Herbert Wilson, Leighton, and other young and good-looking artists, and some ladies whom I did not know, and amongst them Madame Kalergi, a niece of Nesselrode, a tall, large, white-looking woman, who has a reputation for cleverness and a great talent on the pianoforte. This morning I went to Leighton's studio, and saw his drawings, which are full of genius.

Thursday, March 6.

Heard in the morning that Covent Garden theatre was burnt at seven yesterday morning, and went to announce the event to Mario. In the evening, with Adelaide Sartoris and Leighton, to Ristori's rentrée in "Mirrha." She acted more finely than ever, and I was enchanted with her wonderful beauty and classic grace: her tenderness, in this part especially, is indescribable. Adelaide Sartoris had never seen her before, and was as much delighted as astonished at the performance. The audience was in a frenzy of enthusiasm, and yet I do not believe half the people present understood Italian.

Friday, March 20.

I went last night with Adelaide Sartoris and Leighton to see Ristori in Alfieri's play of "Rosmunda."

In reading it I was convinced I should be bored by so inflated a rhodomontade, and that the part of Rosmunda, being one of unmitigated fury and violence, was unsuited to an actress whose chief merit seemed to consist in her power of delineating the gentler passions. I was therefore but little prepared for the wonderful effect she produced upon me and on the audience. The play is horrible and offensive, but her manner of rendering this odious part is nothing short of sublime. Her beauty in the costume of the sixth century is beyond all description, and the

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manner in which she varies the phases of the same passions of hatred and vengeance, and the prodigious power of the whole impersonation, are marvellous. Her acting of the scene in the third act, when she tells Ildevaldo that Amalchilde loves Romalda, is about the best thing I have seen her do; and the last act, in which she murders her rival, and the way in which she seizes her and drags her up the steps, is like a whirlwind sweeping everything before it; too terrible almost to witness, and prevented my sleeping all night.

Monday, March 24.

In the evening I went (as I generally do) to Adelaide Sartoris', where I found Bickerton Lyons, French, and Leighton. This latter is a singularly gifted youth. Besides his talent for painting and drawing, which is already at twenty-five very remarkable, and likely, if he lives, to place him in the highest rank of modern artists, he appears endowed with an extraordinary facility for anything he attempts to do. He speaks many foreign languages with remarkable fluency, and almost without accent; he is possessed of much musical intelligence, and on matters connected with the art which he has made his particular study and profession his information is very extensive—and, I am told by others, better able to judge than myself, that this is the case. With all these qualities, natural and acquired, I never saw a more amiable or single-hearted youth.

Wednesday, March 26.

Went with the Sartoris's, Montfort, and Leighton to the Palais Bourbon to see Morny's pictures—a charming collection. The Emperor had just sent him two beautiful pieces of Beauvais tapestry—marvellous specimens of that manufacture; in return, I suppose, for his speech of the other day, with which his Majesty was highly pleased.

Wednesday, April 2, 1856.

In the morning, with Adelaide Sartoris, Browning the poet, Cartwright, and Leighton, to the Pourtalès Gallery—a charming collection. The pictures that most pleased me were a Paul Veronese, a Rembrandt, and a Greuze. There is also a fine collection of Raphael ware—glass and bronzes. Pourtalès has

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ordered by will that this collection should remain intact for ten years, and then to be sold to the highest bidder.

Wednesday, April 9, 1856.

Last night, after a dinner given by a Lady Monson to Adelaide Sartoris, Leighton, and myself, at Philippe's, we adjourned to the first representation of the Italian translation of Legouvé's play of "Medea"—that in which Rachel refused, after attending rehearsals, to act the principal part, and about which there was a trial. Great curiosity was shown about this performance, and there was a great scramble for places; and, although inserts for nearly three weeks, we were fobbed off with very bad seats in the orchestra. The play had great success, and that of Ristori was prodigious, but not greater than she deserved. The part is most arduous, full of transitions, and almost always on the full stretch. Her costume was most picturesque, having been designed by Schæffer, and she looked like a figure on an Etruscan vase; and in no play that I have yet seen her in does she produce more effect than in certain passages of "Medea." The audience was wound up to a pitch of frantic enthusiasm. I am always astonished at the effect she produces on the mass of the audience, when I know how few there are who really can follow the play. But, whether by means of her countenance, voice, or gestures, she contrives to make all the nuances of her acting felt by the public. I expect when she comes to London she will find a vast difference between this excitable and sympathetic audience and that stupid, flat collection of would-be fashionables who will *promener leurs ennuis* at her performances.

Before his family had arrived in Paris the subject of the Orpheus entitled "The Triumph of Music," to which Leighton was devoting himself, was criticised by his father, which criticism Leighton answered in the following letter:—

I do not think honestly that the choice of a mythological subject like Orpheus shows the least poverty of invention, a quality, I take it, much more manifested in the manner of treatment than in the choice of a moment.

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About fiddles, I *know* that the ancients had *none;* it is an anachronism which I commit with my eyes open, because I believe that the picture will go home to the spectator much more forcibly in that shape.

To his mother he writes:—

RUE PIGALLE.

I have seen Scheffer,[1] who is cordiality itself to me; Robert Fleury, ditto, and I have further made the acquaintance of Ingres, who, though sometimes bearish beyond measure, was by a piece of luck exceedingly courteous the day I was presented to him. He has just finished a beautiful figure of Nymph, which I was able to admire loudly and sincerely. I have also been to Troyon, who was polite.

I am fiddling away at the preliminaries of my pictures, a disjointed and desultory period through which one has to wade to get at one's large canvas.

The Sartoris are of course, as ever, my stronghold and comfort.

Your loving boy, FRED.

I have sent the sketch of my "Orpheus" to Ruskin, and don't yet know his opinion of that particular thing, but I feel about that, that as a *now* responsible artist, it is my *duty* to do things exactly as I feel them and to abide by them, risking criticisms and cavillings of every kind. I must be *myself* for better and for worse; this truth, which I feel strongly myself, has been corroborated by the opinions of Fanny Kemble, Mr. Sartoris and Mrs. Sartoris, all at different times, and quite spontaneously expressed. In haste.—Your dutiful and affectionate son,

FRED LEIGHTON.

The question naturally arises, considering the sequence of the history of the Orpheus picture, *was* Leighton *himself* when he painted "The Triumph of Music"? I have studied

[1] The story is that on Leighton's expressing his gratitude at receiving a visit from him (Ary Scheffer), he replied, "If I did not attach considerable importance to your talent, I should not have mounted three flights of stairs to see you."

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his work from the commencement to the close of his artistic career, and this picture remains the unique example, in my opinion, when he was *not* himself; the only picture which does not carry out the principle he thought of all importance. It does not evince "sincerity of emotion." The feeling and intention of the work when first conceived had been absolutely sincere; but, when it came to the performance, spontaneity had failed. It seems to have been painted when he was overshadowed by an influence which was alien to his real artistic sense, and is a further proof that Paris was an entirely unsympathetic atmosphere to him. The picture appears to me to be in feeling unreal, stagey—not to say, ridiculous. That Leighton, after the first bitterness of his failure was over, shared somewhat the same view of it is certain; for shortly after the Academy Exhibition of 1856 was over he took it off the stretcher, rolled it up, and consigned it to oblivion during his lifetime in the dark recess of a cellar.

Notes in Mr. Henry Greville's Diary, dated April 24th and Tuesday, May 6th, run as follows:—

LONDON, *April* 24.

Went yesterday to Colnaghi's to see Leighton's picture of "Romeo and Juliet," with which I was much pleased. Colnaghi tells me it is much admired, and said, "Young Leighton will, one day, be a very great man."

Tuesday, May 6.

A letter from Leighton, in answer to mine preparing him for the failure of his picture in the Exhibition, says: "Whatever I may have felt about my little bankruptcy, there is no fear of its disabling me for work, for if I am impressionable I am also obstinate; and, with God's will, I will one day stride over the necks of the penny-a-liners, that they may not have the triumph of having bawled me down before I have had time to be heard."

In April Leighton's family left Paris to travel in Switzerland. The following letters to his mother show the spirit in which Leighton met his artistic disaster.

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May 7.

DEAREST MAMMA,—I received your two kind letters in due time, and answer them on the second day you fixed, having in the interval had time to hear about the fate of my picture; but first let me say, dear mamma, that you need never fear my misinterpreting or taking awry any kind advice that your love and solicitude may dictate to you. I am reading as much as ever my eyes will allow—indeed, you are strangely mistaken in thinking I don't see the necessity of reading. I assure you that it is a perpetual mortification to me to feel how little I know, but I stand unfortunately at such a disadvantage owing to the weakness of my eyes and my unprecedented absence of mind; however, I shall do what I can, and hope for the best.

Dearest Mamma, I did not expect to write a *consolatory* note to you to inaugurate your journey, but I am sorry to say that I am in that painful position. My picture, which has been exceedingly badly hung, so that one can scarcely see half of it (indeed I believe only the figure of Orpheus), is an *entire failure;* the papers have abused, the public does not care for it, in fact it is a "fiasco." Ruskin (who likes the "Romeo" very much) is disappointed with "Orpheus," tho' he says of course a man like me can't do anything that has not great merits, and that I am to attach no importance to the malicious articles written by venal critics. Now, dearest Mother, look upon this—you and Papa, who takes so affectionate an interest in my welfare—look upon this, as I do, as a fortunate occurrence; consider what an edge and a zest I get for my future efforts, and what an incentive I have to exert myself to put down the venomous jargon of envious people — next year, tho' the Academicians may think that they have cowed me, I shall very probably not exhibit; but the year after, God willing, they shall feel the weight of my hand in a way that will surprise them. The more they abuse, the better I'll paint—industry against spite—I will have a pull for it. Dear Henry Greville behaves to me like an angel; he writes *every day,* and sends me the *Times* regularly. Mrs. Sartoris, too, writes very often. You will be glad to hear that my prospects about models are rather brighter than they were; I have found two or three that will be useful.

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PARIS, *Sunday.*

Although my letter (and I am afraid a very unpleasant one) must have reached you as soon as the other was fairly out of the house, yet I write a line in answer to all the kind and considerate things you wrote in the idea I might be ill or irritable. I value your kind solicitude, dear Mamma, as much as you can wish, I assure you, and should indeed be heartily sorry in any way to give you pain or make you in any way unhappy —and talking of that, dear Mamma, I sincerely hope you have completely got over your first annoyance about my fiasco, which, except of course in a pecuniary point of view, is in point of fact a fortunate event for my future progress, in the *élan* it gives to my application and particularly to my obstinacy. I am very busy now at "Pan" and "Venus," but have not decided what I shall do next year. I think it is very characteristic of the critics that they *none* of them mention "Romeo and Juliet," which is, I know, universally liked. Dear Mamma, never fear, your boy will walk over all that—depend upon it. How does Papa take it? How the girls?—Give to all my best love, and believe me, your very devoted son, FRED.

Tuesday, 1856.

DEAR PAPA,—In the hope that I should receive to-day Ruskin's pamphlet on the Institution, I delayed until now answering your kind letter. It has, however, not arrived, and as there is great uncertainty whether it really is already published or no, I think it better not to keep you longer without news from me. The criticisms in the papers are, as far as I can judge, partly from the little I have read and partly from what my friends tell me, singularly injudicious, leaving almost entirely untouched the really vulnerable parts of the picture, and attacking almost exclusively that which is least objectionable—the execution.

Ruskin does not much like the picture, and prefers the "Romeo" considerably, but he will write of course in a serious spirit and like an intelligent man. I have just made the acquaintance of Robert Fleury—the best French colourist, in my opinion—and he received me with the greatest kindness and simplicity, showing all that he had, and explaining anything that I wished

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to know; this is a valuable acquaintance which I owe to Montfort. I have made the acquaintance of a highly talented young German genre painter of whom I had heard in Frankfurt; he is my age, and paints with greater facility, but my talent is of a higher order I think. Ary Scheffer has been very amiable and pleasant to me about my fiasco, telling me what he went through himself, and telling me to think nothing of it. I sent to Wild shortly after you left, and was able to render him a little service in the way of some Venetian costumes, still I hesitate to ask him to introduce me to Paul Delaroche. We shall see about all that next autumn when I come back from Italy, when the Viardots will also introduce me to Delacroix.

Pan and Venus are progressing *tout doucement.*

I have written to Watts to ask his leave to put my pictures in his studio (Pan and Venus) in Little Holland House. I read carefully all you said, dear Mamma, about the critics, &c. &c. I honestly think that my ill-luck is in no way attributable to over-hurrying. Those things in my picture which were really most open to discussion, I did all with my eyes open and deliberately, and they were the only ones that the discerning scribblers seem not to have noticed. Again, with regard to the said critics, I think, dear Mamma, you see things "en noir." *Who reports* me to have sneered at ——? I did internally, as I do at all snobs. However, I have long since banished the whole subject. If ever I attain real excellence, the public will in the long run find it out; and if they don't pay me they will at least acknowledge me, especially when the pre-Raphaelite "engouement" has calmed a little. In a fortnight I shall go to England; by that time Pan and Venus will be done, and I think they promise well. I am very anxious to get to London. I mean to enjoy it very much —take my fill, and then go for a short time to Italy to renew my profession of faith before Raphael and Michael Angelo. I am very glad to hear that you are enjoying yourselves, and that you remember me in the midst of your jonquils and anemones.

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CHAPTER V

FRIENDS

LEIGHTON'S friendships were very salient, vivid interests to him among the varied occupations of his life. In any complete picture of his personality these must take a prominence only secondary to his passion for Art and Beauty,—and for "his second home,"—the land that had cast such a strange spell and charm over him from the early days of childhood,—to his love for his family, and his reverent devotion to his master, Steinle, and to Mrs. Sartoris. To these two inspiring friends and teachers he declared he owed what he prized most in life, namely, a development of those gifts and qualities which enabled him to be of service to his generation.

"I have always believed that his ruling passion was *Duty*—the keenest possible sense of it," Mr. Briton Rivière writes. The influences which were the most precious to Leighton were assuredly those which enabled him to extend his own influence in the highest and widest direction, and fulfil exhaustively his duty to his fellow-creatures. Every moment of his life was real and earnest to him. Every moment had a purpose—ever before him was the urgent imperative necessity he felt of being *faithful:* faithful in every detail as in decisive final aims. If an epithet had to be attached to his name, epitomising Leighton's salient characteristics, the most appropriate would surely be "Leighton the faithful."

Many among those who are dead,—also among the now living, found in him their best friend. The letters written to

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STUDY OF HEAD FOR "LIEDER OHNE WORTE." 1860

Leighton House Collection

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him by Mr. Henry Greville, and those that Leighton wrote to Mr. Hanson Walker are good examples, among the many that have been preserved, showing the very prominent place his friends took in Leighton's life. In the first we trace the tender affection he inspired in the hearts of his intimates,[1] and in the second the ardent manner in which Leighton would help artists younger than himself, and how with a parental solicitude he would do his best to forward their true interests.[2]

The following letters from Mr. Henry Greville were written on Leighton's return to Paris, after he had run over to London to place the "Romeo" picture which had been in the Paris International Exhibition with Colnaghi, and

[1] Owing to the kindness of Mr. Greville's niece and executor, Alice, Countess of Strafford, I am able to quote extracts from his letters to Leighton in this "Life." Unfortunately the letters from Leighton to Mr. Greville cannot be found, though, as we know, many were written. During his first visit to Algiers in 1857, Leighton wrote to his mother: "The fact is that as besides corresponding with you I write often to Mrs. Sartoris, and still oftener to Henry Greville, and having continually much the same to tell all of you, I often cannot remember to whom I have written what."

[2] It was when visiting his family at Bath that he first saw Hanson Walker, the "Johnny" of the letters and of the pictures. Leighton was much taken with the picturesque beauty of the boy's head, and made various studies from it. A pencil study he made from his head (see List of Illustrations) he used as a study for his picture "Lieder ohne Worte." Having discovered that his sitter had a natural taste for drawing, Leighton advised "Johnny's" father to let him become an artist. This led to the boy being sent to learn drawing at the School of Art in Bath. When Leighton returned to London after it had been decided that "Johnny" was to study drawing, the young student received one day to his surprise a large case. On opening it he found to his delight a cast from the antique, a drawing-board, paper, charcoal, chalks, in fact, all the utensils wanted by a beginner wishing to work seriously at Art. Never to the end of his life did Leighton's interest in his pupil flag. Never was he too busy to do a kindness to him or his. Perhaps the early and somewhat romantic marriage which "Johnny" made with a lady for whom Leighton felt from the earliest days of the wedded life a very sincere regard, and the charming children who soon made a pretty cluster round their parents, and were always a delight to Leighton, cemented the friendly interest. The head of "Nan" (Mrs. Hanson Walker—see List of Illustrations), painted as a wedding present to "Johnny," is one among the happiest of Leighton's portraits. It is broad in treatment, and fair and very pure in colour, and as a likeness was considered perfect.

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after "The Triumph of Music" had been sent in to the Academy.

LONDON, *April* 25.

DEAR FAY,—You are rather a bad boy not to have given either Ad. or me a *signe de vie*, but as I have not seen her to-day, she may have heard from you. We both want to do so *very* much, so pray write ME a line directly. I only do so to-day to say that at my suggestion Ad. and I rushed off yesterday again to Colnaghi to find out if the Queen or Albert knew of your picture being at his shop; and if not, to ask him to let them know it, if he could do so with propriety. He said he would at once send the picture to B. Palace, as he was in the habit of doing other works; though he did not think that it was likely they would buy another picture of yours, he admitted that it might be advantageous to you that they should see it. He again praised the picture greatly, and told us that it was universally admired. My sister prefers it infinitely to "Cimabue" in all respects, but the fact is, the subject is more attractive to English people than the other. I have nothing else to tell you. I am *very* seedy with an affection of the bronchial tubes, and very low, and would give anything to see you, my dear boy, but must have patience till the pleasant moment of having you under my roof arrives. You will be glad to hear that my mother is better. I have not seen Ellesmere, as he was at the Review, but you may depend on my not forgetting your interests. The said Review was a most glorious spectacle, and they had a splendid day for it. I am starved to death here, and Ad. and I do nothing but grumble. She and I dined *tête-à-tête* last night, and slept and coughed through the evening with the occasional intermission of talking of you—you old Fay! To-night I am going with her to Eli, though I ought to be in my bed. Theo is ill and can't come, and Fanny reads. Oh! that you were to be with us! Tell me if you would object to a VERY slight gold frame to the drawings—merely a *line*, because, as my rooms are all white, and that everything in them has gilt, the drawings want a sort of background—which this slight frame would give them. Tell me what you think. I don't mean to hang up my Vintage, but keep it near me on an *easle* (how do you spell it?). Charley, being highly coloured, looks

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lovely, and don't want any frame—nasty Charley! Now pray write and tell me all about yourself—and the *moddles*—and how you *are*—and how you get on—and what you do. Don't drag off to dull parties, but go to bed early.

God bless you. Amami, ne ho gran bisogno. Colnaghi said he had heard from one Cooper a very good report of "Orpheus."

H.

How have the photographs turned out? I like your portrait less now that you are away—but it can't be helped, it is better than none, but it looks so sad. I have hung you and Ad. up side by side in sweet companionship in my dressing-room, so that I may see you both the first thing on waking.

LONDON, *April 26th.*

DEAREST BIMBO,—You have made us pass some very anxious hours, as the telegraph which I sent off at seven this morning will have testified, though it will also have surprised and perhaps alarmed you until you read its contents. The fact is, *I* thought it odd that we did not hear from you, yesterday at all events, as I felt sure you would have written immediately on getting our joint note from Boulogne, Wednesday, and certainly on the following day. However, I felt sanguine that on going to dine at 79, I should find that Ad. had heard from you, but, on the contrary, I found her full of anxiety at no letter, imagining every species of cause for your silence, which she said was so very unlike you, that I directly caught the same state of worry, and we determined that I should telegraph the first thing this morning to know if you were ill, or if anything had happened. I never slept all night, and of course had worked myself, with her assistance, into a wretched state of anxiety about you—when at nine your letter arrived, and a blessed relief it was. I should not probably have been in such a state, had Adelaide not been convinced that illness or some catastrophe had prevented your writing, because, she said, your *wont* was to do so immediately on parting with her, and she could account for it in no other way. In short, dear Fay, we were very foolish; but I assure you our folly met its own punishment by the anxiety, and which spoilt our "Eli" entirely. Poor Fay! I

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daresay you little thought that we were tormenting ourselves about you, and I, for one, shall try and not do so any more. Your letter is like yourself—dear and kind. With regard to the enclosure, my opinion is that you would not do wisely or handsomely by Colnaghi to withdraw your picture from his keeping, unless he *wished* to get rid of it to make room for the supposed exhibition of drawings; moreover, my own opinion is that you would not do well to exhibit at the Crystal Palace. I have no faith in that institution, and I think it will be a pity to rob your studio of the "Pan" and "Venus" for that purpose; but as I do not consider myself a good judge of these matters or competent to advise you, I think I should be very much guided by what other artists of the same standing as yourself think and do in the matter, and before deciding or answering Mr. Magwood, I should write to Buckner or any one else competent to advise you and ask their opinion. I don't know what Sister Adelaide will say, but I have sent her your letter and the enclosure, and she will probably write to you on the subject. You are *too* dear and nice about my mother. I fear that before you come she will have left London, and I don't think you would like to paint her, because her sweet face is entirely hidden by the shade she is obliged to wear over her poor eyes; but *you* know whether I should like her portrait painted by you! But, dear Fay, you are too lavish of your time on others, and do not think enough of yourself. Here I was interrupted by a visit from Adelaide, overjoyed at hearing all is well with you, and agreeing entirely with me *in re* C. Palace, Colnaghi, &c. She says if C. wishes the picture to be removed, it is for him to express that wish and not you, that a better order of people go to him than those who frequent the C. P., that he is well-disposed towards you, and that it is advisable you should keep him as your friend.

We think Mogford's reference useless, being a foreigner, and we are certain that unless *Millais* and others of the same class exhibit at the C. P., you had best have nothing to do with it. I took Ad. up to your room, and she says you will be *comfy* in it; and she saw your nice face, patted it, and said, "Dear Fay, but it looks so sad!" She thinks both drawings will be better

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for a slight gilt *rim*, but I won't put it on without your leave. I am so glad you are leading a wholesome life, and getting the b. who planted you, rather than dawdle proudly, and be without a good *moddle*. I have nothing to say, dear Bimbo, and you will have had enough of me. I am very bad with an ulcerated throat, cough, and inflamed bronchia, and altogether below par. I have seen hardly anybody since I came. Adelaide would have been pleased with "Eli," had she been in a vein where pleasure was possible. Pauline sang to perfection the lovely music allotted to her. And now, dearest Bimbo, God bless you. Write very often, if only a *line*, as it is comfortable to hear that all is well with you—that is always the news I most wish to get; and tell me how the pictures progress, and your real state of mind about them.—Your old and loving Babbo, H.

I send back Mogford. Penelope B. (Bentinck) tells me that the great judge, George, condescends to approve "Romeo" mightily!!

LONDON, *Monday, April 28th.*

DEAR GOOD FAY,—Cartwright was wrong about the telegraph, but as our anxiety was removed by your letter, I did not expect you to send me one. Knowing how likely you were to write, supposing you to be well, you may imagine that we were not a little anxious at getting no sign of life from you, in return for our daily letters, and I never could have guessed that the Boulogne letter would only have reached you on Saturday! However, all is well that ends well, but we passed a very disagreeable day and night, and it was *because* we did *not* think you capable of putting off writing that we fussed and worried ourselves about you—foolishly, dear Fay, no doubt. I am very seedy and confined to the house by throat, bronchia, unceasing cough, swelled glands, bad eyes—and should not inflict myself and ailments upon you, but that it is a solace and a comfort to *causer avec "mon petit dernier"*—a cognomen which smiles UPON me—and made *me* smile. Sister Adelaide tea'd with me last night *en tête à tête*. Fanny was grand, and would not come in, though she dropped her sister at my door, because (she said) I had not said *to* her that I wished *for* her! I was so little *en train* that I was not sorry to have only Adelaide,

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and we *did* more than once say how we wished Fay was eating the muffin destined for the proud Fanny. Adelaide has just been here, and brought me your dear letter. I don't see any *present* prospect of the fire of my affliction being extinguished or allowed to grow dim, so you may make your mind easy on that score, excellent Fay. I feel for your loneliness, and know what a contrast it must present with the sweet fellowship we have held together so unceasingly for those last two months. The only thing you gain by the loss of your people is more time, and a later repast. I don't doubt poor Mamma being unhappy at leaving you, her true and only Benjamin, and for an indefinite time. I can judge by what I felt at parting with *mon petit dernier*, and *with* the hope of so soon greeting him again. No, Fay, I won't have the Charley drawing, and I won't have you do anything more for any one but yourself, knowing as I do all the things you have on hand—and *à propos* of *that*, I must tell you that I have endeavoured to put another iron in the fire *in re* fresco. I asked Lady Abercorn, who is my dearest friend, to speak to Lord Aberdeen (her father-in-law) who is on the Committee of Taste, or whatever it is called, first about your picture at Colnaghi's and then of you generally as desirous of painting in fresco, and as of one whose studies have been that way directed, in whom I take a great interest; but I made her understand that it was no *job* I wanted done, or that I asked any favour, but merely I wished it to be known that Leighton, a very rising artist, would like to be employed in that line, if an occasion presented itself. Lady A. understood me exactly and being very sympathetic immediately conceived an interest for my *petit dernier* (I wish you were my son, Fay!) and said if she did not see Lord Aberdeen very soon she would write to him. Neither I nor Adelaide know where Windsor and Newton live, so you had best write straight to him to send the colours you want. I think I *must* put just a *baguette d'or* on the drawings, and when you see them on my walls I don't think you will disapprove. With regard to Cartwright, Adelaide says Jules Sartoris has got a place called Tusmore. I should advise him to lose no time in advertising it both in the newspaper and by different agents in town and country. I should think it was a place *sure* to be let, from its convenient distance from London and other advantages. There is no news here.

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LONDON, *May 6th.*

DEAREST FAY,—Your letter is a relief and a comfort. It is both to me to see you take this disagreeable business so manfully, so wisely, and to think that instead of being cast down, your energies will only be aroused by this stupid and unjust criticism. In this case it may, then, well be said, "Sweet are the uses of adversity." As to all the other papers, I can't pretend to say what they may have written, but the *Leader* is one of no repute, and, as Ruskin said to Adelaide this morning, it don't REALLY signify *what* they write; in the long run talent and genius must prevail, as yours will, dear Fay, if it please God to grant you, as I fervently pray, health and strength. She is going to write to you, and will tell you all Ruskin said, and also what she thinks of the Exhibition in general and your picture in particular, which, I hear, is infamously placed—that is, in so bad a light that only *Orpheus* is visible. Passing, I must tell you that Edward (Sartoris) came to see me yesterday, and the *first* thing he said on entering the room was, "Well, I don't think Leighton's picture looks bad. Orpheus's drapery is too yellow, but it don't look amiss at all." This was rather much for him, eh? He likes "Autumn Leaves," and he praised the "Leslie" (which Adelaide says is all very well, but "slaty"). Landseer is beautiful—but E. (Edward Sartoris) was *sous le charme*, having sat next him at dinner at Marochetti's, when he told me L. was as much *aux petits soins* for him as if he had been the loveliest of females. I am so glad about the models, and if I don't hear from you as often shall know why. I am also glad you dine with Cartwright and Co., but *how* you *can* dandle a nasty, doughy, puffy, bread-and-butter smelling thing called a baby! Pah! a baby is my horror and aversion. Never do it again—not even by your own. I could not have dandled even my Bimbo without a grimace. Well done! old hideous ——; if she promise not to act herself, I'll take a box for her next benefit. She is the *âme damnée* of Macready, so that her verdict surprises me. I expect she will begin imitating her, and have Medea translated—horrible idea! Read Ellesmere's speech; it is very pretty, and the whole debate is interesting, but Derby and Co. don't cut a good figure at all. I am getting better now, and dined with my parent

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yesterday, but can't go out in daytime for fear of eyes and throat, the wind is so cold. Of course I read your letter to Ad. (Adelaide Sartoris). (I think you had best now write straight to her, because as I am soon hoping to be out, and have no one to send so far, your letters will get to her quicker and more surely by post.)

You must be very careful, and take time to weigh well and consider the subjects of your future pictures. I think the Mermaid might be both interesting and effective well carried out, and you might also perhaps paint some subject from some one of the Italian poets—Tasso, Ariosto, Boccaccio—for your own satisfaction. God bless you! my dear boy. I am longing to see you again already. Tell me how the models answer and how you get on. *Don't* call Brackley *de*. They are removed to the Meurice. If you don't find them, write to her and offer to go with her (saying at my suggestion) to the Louvre.—Love your old Babbo, H.

Later in the summer Mr. Greville wrote:—

1856, HATCHFORD, *Thursday.*

MY DEAR BOY,—I do sympathise with your disgust at the same time that I think you have acted very *légèrement* about your pictures, and, in fact, taken no trouble or heed about them. *You should have seen to it all yourself before you left London*, or have given directions to Watts, to which he would have attended, instead of leaving him in total ignorance as to what you meant or wished, and which picture or if both were to go. I kept perpetually telling you to see after this business and to be more *exact* in it, but you see now the consequence of not attending to things more carefully. You had better write a curt letter to Greene, reminding him that you *had* given written directions (as you say) that it was your "*Pan*" that was to be removed, and that you made no mention of the "Venus" (what has he done with her?), and again asking him (since he had not replied to the query) whether he had got the "Romeo." I shan't be in London until to-morrow night late, and as you are to be there on Monday there will be no use in my going to Greene, but I can

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do so on Saturday if you wish it. I have had an answer from Ellesmere's secretary, to whom I wrote to go and see if your pictures were well hung, to say that the Exhibition only opens in first week of September,[1] but that he has a friend who is an influential member of the hanging committee, and that he will speak to him in favour of yours being put into a good light. I heard from Adelaide yesterday that she will be in town on Monday and will dine us. I hoped you would have stayed (and she too) all Tuesday and gone away on Wednesday morning, so that we might have spent two evenings together, and I am disappointed. I shall go to Scotland on Wednesday, and am sorry to have settled to do so. I suppose you know Alfred Sartoris marries Miss Barrington—an alliance which will enchant Aunt ——, as the young lady is "The Honourable," and allied to several marquesses and earls.—Addio, caro, your ever affectionate H.

P.S.—Write again by all means to Greene asking *what has become of the "Venus,"* and also whether the "Romeo" has or *not* been sent to Manchester—whether you employ him or not, you have a right to know what he has done with your property. Write a line to Queen Street to-morrow to say at what time you will be there on Monday that I may not be out of the way.

Rain has come, but it is still deliciously warm and fine in the intervals.

Later in the same year Mr. Greville wrote:—

LONDON, *August* 26, 1856.

MY DEAREST FAY,—I have just got your letter of Saturday 23rd from Frankfort, and as you state therein that you were to leave that place on Monday, and that the letters which I sent to Malet for you could only reach him on that morning, it is next to certain that they will not have reached you. I requested him, in the event of your having left Frankfort, or in his failing to find you out, to send them on to the *p. restante* at Venice, and you will probably find them there together with this letter, but I think it best also to send you the originals for fear of accident,

[1] Yearly Exhibition at Manchester.

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as it is desirable that you should write to Mr. Harrison yourself.[1] In the meanwhile, I have told him that when I knew your address I would apprize him of it, and in a few days I shall write and say that you are at Venice; but I don't think he will write to you any more, but that he will expect to know *when you are likely to return.* Having got so far, it of course is out of the question that you should think of, or for a moment be expected to return on purpose, and I think it most likely you will be able to get Watts to go and look at the picture, in case the matter should be pressing; but I think it will be best that you offer to return to England before you settle at Paris, and whenever your present tour (which I told Mr. Harrison was one for artistic purposes) shall be ended. It will be a great bore having to come back even then, on purpose. I am sorry you did not get the letters at Frankfort; on the whole though, perhaps they would only have worried you and have made you *hesitate* as to *returning*, and which perhaps you might have thought *shorter* and less troublesome than having to come back by-and-bye. However, it is very probable you may get Watts to do what is necessary, and that you may be saved the expense and bore of another journey here in the autumn. Adelaide and I contemplated the possibility of your coming over at once from Frankfort, and we both deprecated the idea, though we privately said how intensely glad we should be to see you—selfish as it might be; and it was arranged that I was to telegraph to her to Tunbridge where she is gone to-day. Thanks, you dear boy, for your letter just received. I can understand your pleasure at finding yourself in your old haunts again, with your old friend and master to whom you owe so much. It is a great comfort to me to find that he likes your drawings, though I never doubted his doing so. I was amused by your account of the Pimp and Ballerina, whose modesty seems to have attracted you more than that of the Russian Princess. Since writing to you last I have done but little. I am come into town this morning expecting to find Ffrench, but he has not turned up. I saw

[1] This correspondence refers to the "Cimabue's Madonna" at Buckingham Palace. Small holes in the canvas having appeared, the authorities were anxious that Leighton should inspect the picture, and take steps to prevent further mischief.

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Sister A.[1] yesterday on her way through, but my visit was spoilt by the —— Girls and Cigala, who (as he never made love to me) appears to me merely a *bon sabreur* and horse fancier. You know my opinion of the young ladies, who, *par parenthèse*, adore you. I am still at H. (Holland) House, and shall remain there until Friday, when I come to dine with Adelaide, and shall then go to Hatchford until I repair to Worsley—my sister will be established there before long. Yesterday, Ellesmere's secretary sent me a letter to say that the gent. of the hanging committee "would take care that Mr. Leighton's pictures were placed in the most favourable position."[2] So let us hope for the best. I must tell you that Vic. is come home, and is now opposite to me, and that she looks admirably well. We have had heaps of people at H. House at dinner almost every day. Marochetti came yesterday. He is full of the subject of colouring statues, and has just taken to Osborne two busts which the Queen was to present to-day to P. Albert for his birthday. Marochetti *traite d'imbéciles* all the English sculptors who cannot yet take in this "undoubted fact." He says Gibson is the only one who admits it, but even he will not go Marochetti's lengths. Watts is (you know) at Malvern, and the doctor thought him decidedly better before he went, and that he may get into tolerable health. I think he is to be at Malvern three weeks. John Leslie's wedding is at this moment proceeding; he has almost settled to buy Lady C. Lascelles' house at Campden Hill, which will be a capital position for his studio, and another Sunday lounge for you next year. Next year! (*eheu fugaces!*) a long time to wait to see you again under my roof, you very dear boy. I always think this dispersing time so melancholy. I wonder if I shall hear from you before Venice. Oh yes, of course, you will write wherever you stop. Mind and tell me about your studies, and what you see and do—above all things take care of your health, and don't catch fever by working in the sun, &c. Charles says he can't think where your hat box can be—he is in ecstasies with your old trousers, which have come out bran

[1] Mrs. Sartoris.

[2] In the Yearly Exhibition at Manchester, where Leighton sent the "Romeo," "Pan," and the "Venus."

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new and a capital fit! You would be quite envious if you could see them.

Good-bye, best of Fays. I shall send this letter off and write another in a few days. I will mark *outside* the dates of my letters (and PRAY, mind and always date yours—you never do) so that you will know which to open first. God bless you, you dear *good* fellow.—Love your fond old BABBO.

LONDON, *Thursday, August* 28.

DEAREST FAY,—One line to say that this afternoon your letter of Sunday with the enclosed for Harrison reached me. It is a relief to me that you *got* the letters, and I think your answer does very well, but as it had no cover, and that I was obliged to send it in my own name to Harrison, I added, what *you* had better have done, that if necessary you could easily come over the beginning of November, and I rather hope they will accept that offer, as by that time the Court will have returned from Scotland (perhaps to Windsor though), and you might have a chance of being brought into contact with Albert, and you would jabber good German to him and win his heart, which *may* be valuable to you. With regard to Watts, he said he should be too happy to do *anything* for you, but he wished you to be thrown with Albert. He (Watts) is better and has left Malvern. I got yesterday the *Manchester Guardian*, with a sort of preliminary list of the pictures which are to be opened to the private view to-morrow. They were not then all hung, but they mention the "Romeo" as in a conspicuous place—a sombre picture, but the Romeo and Juliet finely conceived—or something to that effect. You shall hear all about it. I have got little Ffrench till Saturday, when I go to Hatchford and he home. I expect Adelaide to-morrow—we dine with her, and I *fear* shall have ——, which will be a potent bore. There is of course no other news. Penelope Bentinck has produced a huge boy, and is quite well. John Leslie's marriage went off without any tears, and he made a very good "neat and appropriate."

God bless you, my very dear boy—you are not so fond of me as I am of you—be sure of it. Take care of yourself, and write to and love your old BABBINO.

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Tell me all about your studies, as they interest me, and don't forget to put me up to some pretty cheap gilt-moulding for my frame.

Adelaide was pleased and touched at your seeing about her pictures. Fay, she is devotedly attached to you—you may be sure of it.

HATCHFORD, *September* 9.

MY DEAREST FAY,—I am going to begin a letter to you which I can only send when I know where to direct to you, for after Venice (from whence I have not heard from you yet) you have given me no address. I hope to hear that you got all mine sent to that place, and particularly the one enclosing a copy of Phipps' letter to me in which he tells me it is the Queen's wish that you come over here on your return to Paris. I got your letter from Meran on Thursday last, and I sent it off to Adelaide by that post, enjoining her to let me have it back by the next, since which I have never had a line from her, and at last grew so alarmed that I wrote to Anne to ask what had happened, and that I could not but fear Ad. had been sent for to Edward[1] in Ireland. To this letter I got *no* reply, and I have been in great suspense and anxiety till this morning, when sure enough my surmise proved correct, and I got a few lines from Adelaide herself from Muckross, whither she arrived on Saturday, having left Warnford the day before, they having sent for her. She has, I do not doubt, written to you and told you that she found him neither dead or dying, but in a low, bilious fever, having been in bed a week, and the doctor not giving much hope of a speedy recovery. She, however, intends to move him as soon as it is possible, but it may be some time first, and of course their plans are more or less uncertain, and mine of meeting them in London at an end, as I shall be gone to Worsley before they can be in town. It is, however, a mercy that this illness is not even more serious than it is. When I heard his account of himself as I passed through London, I wondered that she was not more alarmed, but I did not tell her how serious the case appeared to me, and as it has proved; and when I did not hear from her, I immediately guessed what had occurred. She found

[1] Mr. Edward Sartoris.

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Fordwich there, and says the place appeared a Paradise, and now that she is easy about Edward, perhaps she won't mind spending the time there instead of Warnford. Only, the boy was to go to Eton on the 11th, and I don't know how they will manage that. I have written to Ad. to-day, and have sent her a volume I received this morning from Fanny Kemble. The letter would interest you, but is too bulky to send. She speaks of you in a way that pleases me and would gratify your vanity in every respect, and describes you as one of the most interesting people she ever met, and hopes that your art may be an unceasing source of fame, profit, and delight to you. I will keep the letter and show it to you when I have the happiness of seeing you, my dear Fay. When Sarah leaves her she is to begin reading in the West, and I suspect that will answer better to her than the girl's society! Dear Fay, my sister writes to me that she and Brackley went into Manchester to see your pictures. I will transcribe what she says: "They are pretty well placed, but the 'Romeo' is so dark a picture it is difficult to see, and the lighting of the gallery has something of the defect of that at B. House. The 'Pan' and 'Venus' seem to me to be very good pictures. *B. considers them improper.* I like the 'Pan' the best. There are not many good pictures in the Exhibition." To this I replied that I was much diverted by Brackley's prudishness, but that if such personages were to be painted, it was not possible to clothe them in crinoline or in green gauze drawers such as Bomba imposed upon his Ballerina. It makes me so sick, all that cant about impropriety, but there is so much of it as to make the sale of "nude figures" very improbable, and therefore I hope you will turn your thoughts entirely to well-covered limbs, and paint no more *Venuses* for some time to come. I trust you will devote all your energies to the Romeo, Dalilah and Syren, and if you have any spare time, that you will do our Friar Lawrence. I forget if I told you that Miss Kaye saw your portrait of yourself, and says it is quite a *libel* on your physiognomy. Why *did* you make yourself so pinched and sad-looking, Fay?

September 12.—Your letter from Venice of 5th reached me this morning. I feel sure you will not have got my long

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letter directed there on the 5th and enclosing Phipps' answer, so I had better transcribe it: "It would be very desirable that Mr. L. should run over from Paris when there to see exactly what is the damage done to his picture, and I will have nothing done to it in the meantime, but care shall be taken that the injury shall not be increased. Mr. L. does not state in his letter where an answer would reach him, and if you are in communication with him perhaps you would have the kindness to mention to him what Her Majesty's wishes on this subject are." So, you see, my dear boy, you *must* come, and perhaps it may not be time so wasted, as I shall try and find out when the Queen comes back from Scotland, so that if possible you may time your arrival accordingly. The P. of Wales is going to see the manufactories at Manchester, and they are going to ask him to Worsley, I believe. Only fancy those brutes at Warnford never sending me Adelaide's[1] letter written to me the morning of her hastening off to Ireland a week ago until to-day! Too bad. She wrote in great distress of mind and evidently hardly expected to find Edward alive, as she did not believe the telegraph which said he was better, thinking that if it were so they would not have sent for her. You dear boy, I am so glad you enjoy your Venice—which is all very pretty no doubt, but I hate stinks and fleas—and they abound there. I hate wobbling in a boat and walking in dirty alleys, so I don't envy you at all. Have you fallen in with either of the new married couples, Wilson or Leslie? Fay, it is well you should come and see me, for I don't think there is much chance of my going to Paris. The Hollands are going to Naples, as the wall of their house at Paris has been damaged by the pulling down of the next house and has to be rebuilt, and I shall have no money to pay for lodging and food. There are long lists of the pictures the Queen and others are to send to the great Manchester Exhibition next year—I think twenty at least from the Royal Galleries, and Ellesmere sends eight or ten. I see that Eastlake is at Rome, so you may fall in with him there. I conclude my next letter must be directed there. You should recollect to give your address *d'avance*. The second post has just

[1] Mr Edward Sartoris.

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brought me the enclosed, which, as she says she don't write to you, I send (though it will cost a fortune), knowing that it will gladden your eyes to see her hand. She loves you dearly as I do, Fay! Your Meran letters are very pretty, and I wish I could see that place. Good-bye, and God bless you. We have lovely weather—not one bad day since I have been here. Go and see the Villa Salviate. What have you done with Steinle—what heard of Gamba? Love.—Your old loving father, H.

Enclosed is one from Mrs. Sartoris to Mr. Greville, which he sends on to Leighton.

MUCKROSS, KILLARNEY.

Many thanks. I got a letter too this morning, which I send you with your own—let me have mine back. E. (Edward Sartoris) is certainly a little better, thank God—still in bed though. He hopes perhaps to get off next Saturday—this appears to me nothing short of impossible—Monday I should think the very soonest for such a move. This place is divinely beautiful, I see, but I go out very little, and what with the shock I received before starting, and the fatigue of my rapid journey, and the anxiety about him, I feel incapable of receiving any *impression* from the place. I seem to acknowledge its beauty, but I cannot get even a momentary enjoyment out of it at present. The *hosts* are very kind. Herbert always was an excellent fellow. I cannot write to Fay, for with all the delay caused by his letter having had to follow me here, my answer would no longer catch him at Venice, and I do not know where he next pitches his tent. Dear boy! he seems very happy—God bless him and keep him so!

MUCKROSS, *Tuesday, 9th.*

HATCHFORD, *September* 22.

DEAREST FAY,—The enclosed reached me to-day having first been sent to Ebury Street.[1] I think it best to send it to you that you may reflect on what you will do, though it seems to me that with the exception of the "Cimabue" you have *no* picture you could send to this Exhibition. If you wish to be represented by

[1] Papers relating to the great Manchester Exhibition held in 1857.

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that work, I conclude you would have to ask permission of the Queen to send it there, and this should be done through "The Honourable Colonel Phipps," or Mr. Harrison, his secretary. This permission would of course be granted at once. When Charles told me in my bed this morning that a letter had come for you from Manchester, I fondly hoped it was to announce sale of one or other of your pictures! I wrote yesterday, and have nothing more to say to-day but that I am better, though still seedy. We have got the equinoctial gales with rain. I fancy we, France and England, are going to recall our missions from Naples, if Bomba don't give in, and send squadrons of ships. But what then? I don't suppose we mean to bombard the town. But he will do *just enough* to give us a pretence for holding our hand, and matters will then resume their ordinary course, and the K. of the two Sicilies be governed just as it was before. Our position is a very ticklish one in this affair. I long to hear whether you saw Pasta—and anything more than the waddle, the red face and beard. Mind and answer my questions. I should tell you that amongst your papers that came from Manchester they sent P. Albert's letter to Ellesmere, and the long prospectus too, but there is no use in forwarding it to you—this will already cost a fortune, but I think it best to send it. When is it you expect to be here? How long do you stay at home?—Addio, carissimo,

H. G.

LONDON, *September* 29.

MY DEAREST FAY,—Here I am, sleeping in London on my way to Worsley to-morrow morning, and I have got my Mère Augusta occupying your room; the first *female* I have ever housed or fed, and it will be a rehearsal for Sister Ad. I have just missed her, as she went to the station as I left it, but I found a letter from her just returned from putting the boy to school; it is a bore that I missed her, as I shall not see her for an age. Edward has been committing all sorts of follies and is again confined to his room, but is better. He ought to come to London and consult a clever man, or he will be very ill, as he was once before. What a fellow you are never to say a word about Pasta to me! Of course Mrs. Siddons had a magnificent

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eye and brow—who said she had not?—and was a glorious actress, but I should always have preferred Reston. What did Pasta say of *her?* You are wrong about P. not being *powerful*—she was *tremendous;* her voice was one of immense power—almost coarse at times, but prodigious, and her *gestes* sublime from grace and strength. Dear Fay, I have measured the frame; it is twelve inches wide and fourteen long. Now do find me a pretty cheap croûte. I have seen no one in London but Lady Shelburne, who said there was no news. She disapproves, like me, of the policy with regard to Naples, and I think we shall find by-and-by a great reaction *là dessus.* By-the-bye, when at Rome go and hear the opera Verdi has been composing for that place on the story of Adrienne, and tell me all about it. He wrote formerly such pretty melodies, and is a clever fellow. I don't know what Adelaide will do about going to Germany, but I hope give it up, as for many reasons it appears to me at this moment to be a foolish scheme.

Good-night, you dear boy. I can't frank this, as it is late, and I don't know how, so you must pay this time. Write soon, and *answer* my letters.

I don't quite understand what it is you are doing in Italy except amuse yourself. Is there any other ——? How long will it be before I see you?—Addio, caro caro, tanto tanto, H.

On the death of Lady Ellesmere, his sister, in answer to Leighton's letter of sympathy Mr. Greville writes—

HATCHFORD, *Wednesday.*

MY DEAREST FAY,—In my affliction, I have one consolation—and it is such events as these that prove it—I am rich in friends, more so, much more than I deserve—and amongst them there is no one whose unselfish love I prize more than yours.

Dear Fay, I *know* you feel for me, and I am grateful.

God bless you for it.—Your affectionate H.

A short note to his father from Leighton announces the death of this dear friend in December 1872.

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ATHENÆUM CLUB, PALL MALL, S.W.,
Friday.

MY DEAR PAPA,—I lost last night one of my oldest and dearest friends—Henry Greville; he died without much suffering, and looks this morning calm and beautiful in his rest. You know what I lose in him.—Your affectionate son, FRED.

Among many letters of the kind, preciously preserved by those who owe much to Leighton, the following notes, addressed to his young friend "Johnny" (Mr. John Hanson Walker), may be found interesting as exemplifying the trouble which Leighton would take in helping young artists, and with what kindness, sincerity, and delicacy he tendered his advice and assistance. None of these letters are dated.

THE ATHENÆUM.

MY DEAR JOHNNY,—I write one line in haste to say how sorry I am to hear that your health has been unsatisfactory of late. I earnestly trust you won't disregard your doctor's advice, and that you will, *at any sacrifice*, do something to recover strength, even though a long sea voyage were necessary. Health is the *first* thing. Talk it over with Miss Nan; if her love is as sincere as you believe, and I don't for a moment doubt it, she will give you the same advice.

For myself, I begin to think my studio will never be ready. I have not done a stroke of work. I *hope* at the end of next week I shall be at it again.

In October I am off to Rome.—Yours sincerely,

FRED LEIGHTON.

2 HOLLAND PARK ROAD,
ADDISON ROAD, KENSINGTON.

ATHENÆUM CLUB,
PALL MALL, S.W.

Supposing a proper price were given, should you care to copy (for a man of position) a portrait by Sir William Beechey and one or two by Sir Thomas Lawrence? I am not asking you to do it for a moment, I merely want to know whether you would *care* to do the work; *if* so, please let me know what you would ask.

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I have seen Mr. Greville to-day, and he begs me to tell you that the Countess Grey will be glad if you can undertake for her, for the sum of £10, a copy of a portrait of Lady Charlotte Greville. The picture is now with the Countess of Ellesmere, Mr. Greville's sister, and shall be sent to you wherever you wish, if you will let me know at once. Is it to go to Great Castle Street? Lady Ellesmere will be extremely obliged if you will not keep the picture a moment longer than you absolutely require it to make a good copy; the portrait is that of her mother, and she is extremely loth to part with it, even for a time. Please send me a line in answer to this, and believe me always.

Thursday.

The picture will be duly sent to you.

I have another matter for your consideration: Mr. Greville wants to know if you can think of any good picture (Sir Joshua or Gainsborough would be best) that would make a good companion to the one he has already bought of you; if you could suggest anything suitable, he would give you the commission. I am very glad you should have encouragement, but I trust you will not flag in your zeal about more important studies.

I send you the money from Mr. Greville for the portrait of his mother. I am very glad you should have this new commission, but you must thank *him, not me,* for it was entirely his idea and desire. He is indeed one of the kindest and best men possible. I look on him myself as a second father.

To save time, I shall make arrangements for you to work in my studio on the *4 first* days of January, if you can manage it. I shall be out of town, and you will have the place all to yourself.

I wish you a happy Xmas and New Year, and remain.

WARNFORD COURT,
BISHOPS WALTHAM.

You will forgive me, I am sure, for not writing to you to thank you for your letter, received some weeks back; but the fact is I have been so very busy as to make writing a matter of very great difficulty. I heard from your father not long ago that you have been

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very fortunate in getting capital commissions for portraits where you have been staying. I am very glad indeed to hear it, and trust sincerely that you feel you are progressing as steadily in proficiency as in prosperity. To the commissions you have had in the country, I have one to add here. Mr. Henry Greville wishes you to paint for him a copy of a head of a relation of his—I believe, of poor Lady Ellesmere, his sister, whose recent death has been such a terrible grief to him. You will, I am sure, be glad to undertake this painting, even though it may not in itself be very interesting. The size is a sort of oval kit-cat, not large. He proposes to offer you ten pounds for it.

How is Miss Nan? I hope you have good accounts of her, and that all goes smoothly between you.

I send this to Bath to be forwarded, as I don't know your present whereabouts.

DEAR JOHNNY,—I am just off to Paris, and write one line in hot haste to thank you for yours, and to say that I am delighted to hear you are conscious of progress. Come back as soon as you can *conveniently*, please, because Mr. Greville has *borrowed* Lady Ellesmere's portrait for you to copy, and wants to return it as soon as possible to the Duke of Devonshire.

Come and see me when you return, and believe me, with kind regards to Miss Nan,—Yours always, F. L.

2 HOLLAND PARK ROAD,
KENSINGTON, W.

I want very much, before they have quite disappeared, to get for myself and for a friend a couple of old-fashioned country bumpkins' smocks; you know the sort of thing. Do you chance to know any one in any of the villages about Bath who could pick up a couple? I should like a brown one (*NOT a white Sunday one*) and a green one, and that they should *not* be washed—well worn, untidy things. If you saw your way to getting me such garments, I should be very grateful, but don't *trouble* about it.

If you have leisure to think of anything but Miss Nan just at present, will you do me a favour? Will you get for me a peasant's *wide-awake*, in shape like the one I painted in your

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portrait, only really *old* and *soiled* and *stained;* bought, in fact, if possible, off a bumpkin's head? Can you do this for me, and either send it or bring it if you are about to return shortly? I will pay you when we meet.

When is the wedding to be? or is it already over? I wish you all happiness and prosperity, and remain with kind remembrances to Miss (or Mrs.) Nan,—Yours truly,

FRED LEIGHTON.

I hope you can read this; my hands are so cold I can scarcely hold the pen.

Mr. Greville has very kindly desired me to give you another commission, this time a larger one. He wants you to copy from my large picture the group of women carrying flowers, the size of the original.[1] He offers you £25 for if. If you are disposed, as I have no doubt you will be, I would, if I were you, write him a line of thanks for the kind interest he shows in you. In great haste.

One line in a great hurry to say that I am delighted to hear that you have got in to the life school at the Royal Academy, and to thank you for the photo., which is capital.

I have not touched my Venus since you went away. I have been a good deal out of town myself, and have spent most of my time in finishing the two large decorative figures, which have now gone home. I am sorry you did not see them.

Come as soon as you can to begin Mr. Greville's picture.

I leave town Saturday next, and shall not see you till Saturday the 6th July, so I write a line to say that you will set to work by yourself; the maid will light you a fire and give you the key of the studio.

I have written direct to Gatwell to order the canvas, or it would not have been ready in time. You are to paint the group full size. *Trace it* to get it quite accurate. Put the head of the centre figure, the woman in *yellow,* about four inches or four and

[1] "A Syracusan Bride."

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PORTRAIT OF MRS. HANSON WALKER

By permission of Mr. Hanson Walker

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a half inches from the top of the canvas; that will give you all the rest. *Leave out* the little *child sitting*. Go slap at the colour, vigorously but *NOT quick*. The slower you work, if you work with energy, the sooner you get through, and the better the result.

I hope you are enjoying yourself.

Although I certainly think it is a pity to exhibit too soon, nevertheless I think that your particular situation just now does justify you in doing so, as long as you confine yourself to the Suffolk Street Gallery. I sincerely hope you may sell your pictures.

With kind regards to Mrs. Nan and love to my god-child, I am, in haste, yours always, F. L.

I can't quite make out the price as written in your note, so to avoid mistakes I send blank cheque, which pray fill in yourself.

Just off—good-bye.

26th December.

I have got your note and enclose little cheque. This is as it should be. It is absurd that because I am an old friend, you should be a loser by me in time and pocket.

With a merry Xmas and New Year to you and Nan, I remain, in haste, your sincerely, FRED LEIGHTON.

2 HOLLAND PARK ROAD,
Monday.

Many thanks for your letter. I have had absolutely no time to answer sooner, and now can only do so most briefly. I am extremely glad to hear of the success of your labours at Dorchester, and think you are very right to take for yourself and "Mrs. Nan" a refreshing little holiday on the hills.

I will begin the portrait next week,[1] when you return, at which time also I hope to show you some under-painted work which I think may interest you. I shall certainly call and see your screen. It will no doubt be a very useful bit of "property" to you.

Remember me very kindly to your wife.

[1] The portrait of Mrs. Hanson Walker, which Leighton painted as a wedding present for his young friend.

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MY DEAR JOHNNY,—I am much obliged to you for your letter, telling me of your doings in the country. I think you will do wisely in going to the Isle of Wight to paint landscape; the danger of copying the old masters too exclusively, as you have been forced to do lately, is that one is apt to fall into mannerism by trying to see Nature with the eyes of others; painting landscape direct from Nature is the best possible corrective against this tendency.

I shall be glad to see you and what you have done on your return, if you are here before the 20th or 22nd August; if not, we shall meet in October, when I return from the East.

I am working away at my picture, which will be underpainted before I leave England.

I wish you joy of your summer trip, and remain, yours very truly, FRED LEIGHTON.

6th September.

I have just got your letter, and scribble a line in haste (for I am very busy) to say that you are wholly at liberty to do whatever you choose with Nan's picture, and that I am glad for your sake that people like it. I am also much pleased to hear that you have an interesting portrait on the easel, in which you see progress and improvement in the matter of breadth and light and subordination of half tints; nothing is more important in painting; I think that after accuracy and refinement of form, it is the quality you should most strive for. I am myself tolerably well, but not by any means brilliantly. I have got to work at a few small heads, which you will see before long.

In haste, with love to Nan and the children.

LYNTON, *Saturday.*

I have just received your note, and hear with sincere regret that you have not been prospering lately in your affairs. I am in great difficulty as to what I can do for you in the matter of the Curatorship. If it were only a question of testifying to your character, zeal, industry, &c. &c., I should have real pleasure in giving you that testimony in the highest and fullest degree. But, my dear Johnny, if I am not very much

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mistaken, the Curator is expected to be able when required to *advise and direct the pupils*, and I cannot in candour conceal from you that your age and experience do not appear to me yet to qualify you for that part of the duties. If it were not so, why does the candidate send in some of his works for inspection? You must not be angry with me, Johnny; you know I have always spoken the plain truth to you, and am always ready and desirous to help you when it is in my power. I should be only too glad to think of your obtaining some post that should relieve you from all immediate pecuniary care. Give my love to your wife and children, and believe me always, yours most sincerely,

FRED LEIGHTON.

P.S.—I shall be back on Wednesday or Thursday.

Sunday.

In case any alteration should have been made in the arrangements of the Schools during my absence, and that *teaching* is not expected as part of the duties of a curator, I send you a letter to the Council, as I should be sorry you lost any fair chance by my absence.

You heard from me no doubt yesterday.

Care of MRS. WALKER,
NEALINMORE, GLEN COLUMBKILLE,
CO. DONEGAL.
15*th.*

I have got your note, in regard to which I feel some little embarrassment. I am, as you know, always pleased when it is in my power to be of any use to you, and I should therefore wish to help you in this matter concerning which you write. I own, however, to having some hesitation in asking this favour of Mr. Hodgson, because I fear that the granting of it would be a source of a good deal of inconvenience to him, and he might, out of his old friendship, be put in an awkward position; he would be equally loth to say "yes" or "no." The picture hangs in his dining-room, *and cannot possibly be moved.* The copy would be a lengthy affair, for there is an enormous amount of work in the group you speak of, and you would

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have, therefore, to be established for a long time in a room which is in daily use by the family. I do not at all say that he might not grant the favour you ask, but I own I feel that *I* cannot, discreetly, ask it of him. I am sure you will not misinterpret my declining, and I shall be very sincerely glad if you yourself succeed in your direct appeal.

I trust you and yours are thriving, and that you have not suffered lately from your leg.

This is a wild, wind-swept corner of Ireland in which I am staying, and abounding in matter for studying, especially rock forms, but the inconstancy of the weather puts sketching almost out of the question.

This is a matter of comparative indifference to me, as I came here purposely for rest, and not for work.

Give my love to Nan and the chicks.—Sincerely yours,

FRED LEIGHTON.

Do you know of any one who would do a life-size *copy* of a portrait of the Queen in robes for the sum of £100? I have been asked to inquire. It is, I believe, for Chelsea Hospital. In former days it might have been worth *your* while; now it no longer is, it would not pay you; but you perhaps know of some less prosperous artist who would undertake it, and who would do it *well*—for of course that is expected.

2 HOLLAND PARK ROAD,
KENSINGTON, W.
(*Postmark, Mar.* 9. 82.)

I am absolutely *ashamed* to rob you, but you offer me the drawing so kindly that I can't possibly refuse it; I am delighted with it, only you must let me give you a little drawing some day in return. With very best thanks.

The following letter was written when Mr. Hanson Walker was in America. In it Leighton refers to the ceiling he painted for Mr. Marquand (see List of Illustrations):—

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STUDY OF GROUP FOR CEILING IN MUSIC ROOM

Executed for Mr. Marquand, New York, 1886

Leighton House Collection

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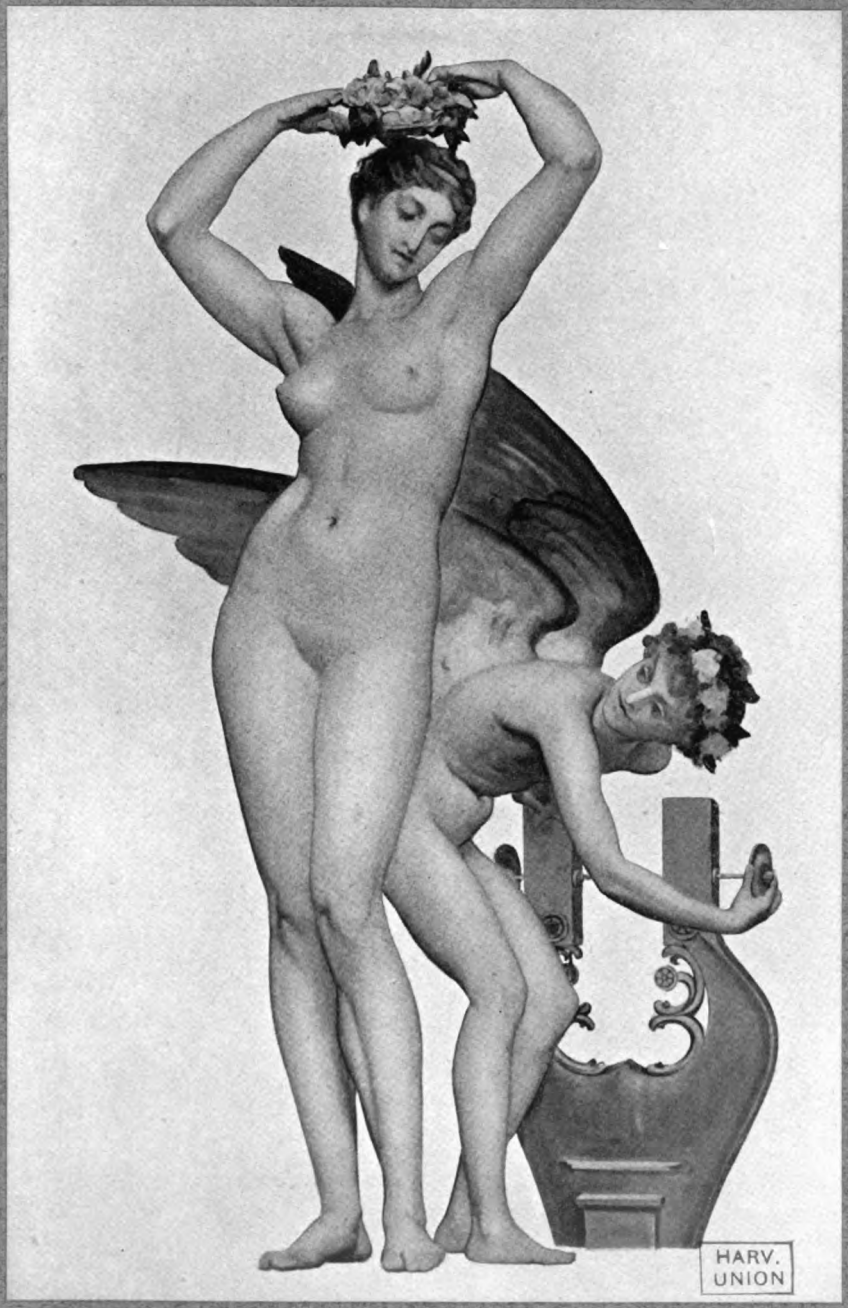

HARV.
UNION

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FIRST SKETCH OF GROUP FOR MR. MARQUAND'S CEILING IN MUSIC ROOM, NEW YORK

Leighton House Collection

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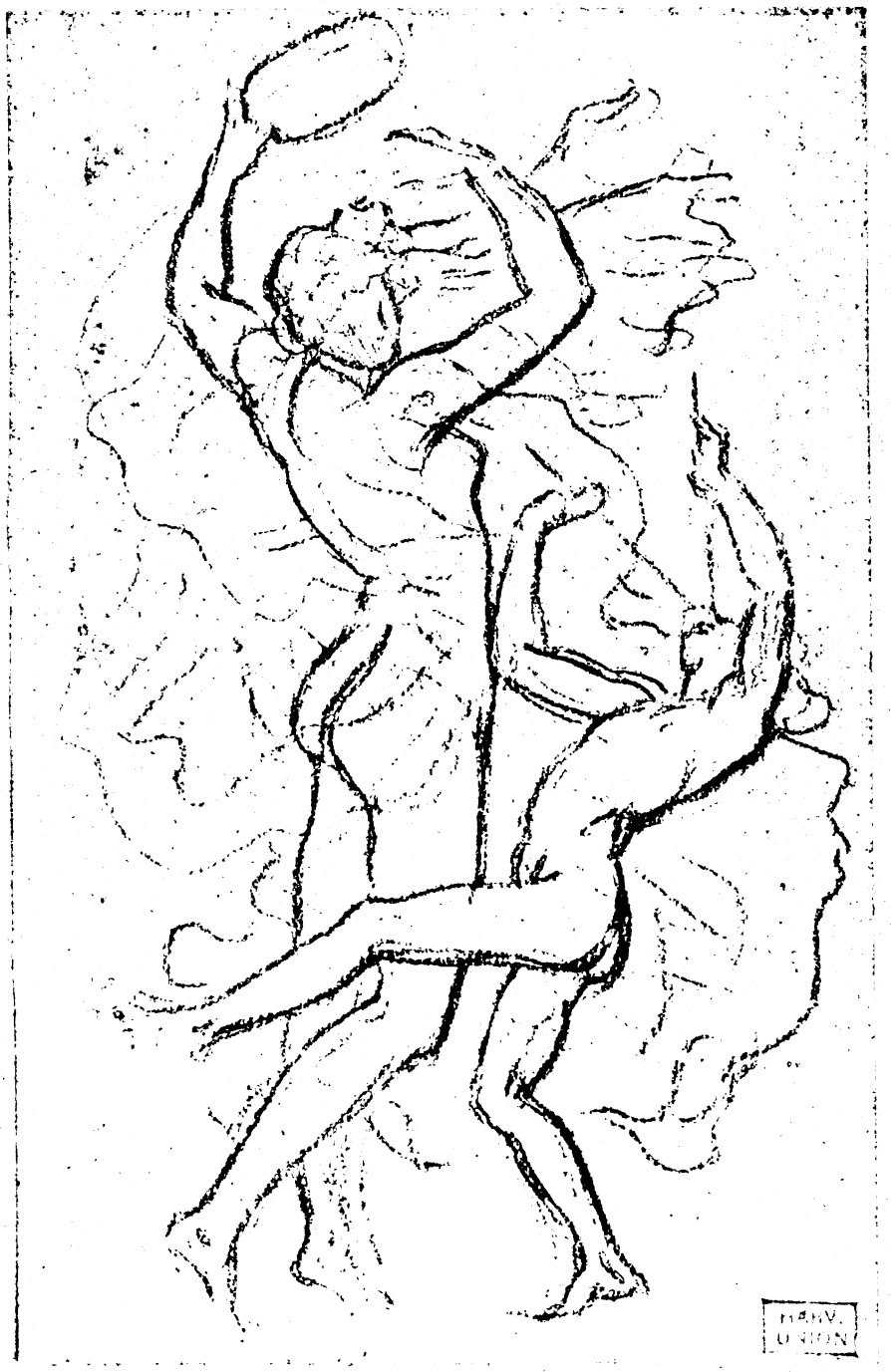

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2 HOLLAND PARK ROAD,
KENSINGTON, W.,
12th February 1887.

DEAR JOHNNIE,—I was very glad to get your letter giving so very satisfactory an account of yourself and your doings. I had already heard of your prosperity in a general way from Nan, who came to see me before starting, but who told me also how lonely you felt. It must have been a great joy to you to see her again, and it will be a still greater when you see the (*fourteen?*) youngsters about you once more; you will, like everybody who crosses the water, bring back a very pleasant recollection of American kindness and hospitality, and, I am glad to think, also a good pocketful of money. I hope it will bring you luck here. I am glad that Mr. Marquand has made you welcome to his house, which I understand is very beautiful. I know his Vandyke well; it belonged to an acquaintance of mine, Lord Methuen, who has a number of beautiful things at Corsham. It is one of the finest I know, and stands quite in the front rank of Vandykes. The Turner also I know, a rare favourite of mine. But of the Rembrandt I know nothing. I am glad, too, you thought my "ceiling" looked well. I hope he has introduced *a little gold in the rafters* to *bind* the paintings to the ceiling itself. Give my love to Nan, and believe me, with all good wishes, sincerely yours, FRED LEIGHTON.

Please remember me to the Marquands and to your friends the Osbornes.

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CHAPTER VI

STEINLE AND ITALY AGAIN—FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF THE EAST, 1856–1858

In Mr. Henry Greville's diary we find the following entry:—

Thursday, July 24th, 1856.

Went on Monday to Hatchford with Leighton, and passed all Tuesday with him and Mrs. Sartoris on St. George's Hills. The day was enchanting, and the Hills in their greatest beauty.

Before leaving London in 1856 Leighton wrote to his mother:—

London, *Wednesday*, 1856.

As my stay in London is drawing to a close, and nobody writes to me, I must write to somebody. I am happy to say (for I know it will interest you) that my "Pan" and "Venus" are admired as much as I could wish, so that I am not without hopes of selling one of them at Manchester. Gibson was quite delighted with them; I am, however, bound to say he knows nothing about it. The sketches of my "Orpheus" I have sold to White for £25, which comes "unkimmon" handy, as this place is ruinous. I have made the acquaintance of Rossetti, one of the originators of the pre-Raphaelite movement. He is apparently a remarkably agreeable and interesting man. Hunt also I like much. My plans are these: on Monday next I leave London, and shall spend a small week between the Cartwrights and (perhaps) the Grotes, after which on or before the 12th I shall be with you in Bath, where I shall remain until the 16th, on which day I shall come up by the early train to town, where I shall meet H. Greville, stay long enough to get my passport in order, and then be off double quick to Italy. I am longing to get to work again; I am

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doing nothing whatever except Henry's dog, which takes up what little time I have. Will you tell Papa that I went to the shop he recommended, and got a splendid Shakespeare ready bound in eight volumes for three guineas!

From Bath he wrote to Steinle:—

Translation.]

9 CIRCUS, BATH,
August 2, 1856.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,—In about ten days I expect, on my way to Italy, whither I go on a short student journey, to pass through Frankfurt or Cologne, according as you are in one or the other, exclusively in order to take my dear master once more by the hand; and if you are at the moment in Frankfurt, I might even spend two or three days in the old Bokaga, and even draw a composition as in the old times. Do, dear friend, send me a line by return of post in order that I may make arrangements.

The rest verbally—I have sadly forgotten my German.

Hoping to meet very soon, dear master.—Think of your pupil, FRED LEIGHTON.

Translation.]

BATH. 9 CIRCUS
(*later*).

MY VERY DEAR MASTER,—I have just received your dear lines, and hasten to say that nothing could be more delightful to me than to travel with you again, if only for a few days.

I had intended to go *viâ* Milan for the sake of quickness, but I will go direct through the Tyrol to Venice.

If all goes well, I will arrive in Frankfurt on the 23rd of this month; does that fit in with your plans?

How delighted I am to see you again, my good Master!

To our speedy meeting!—Your grateful pupil,

FRED LEIGHTON.

Leighton had felt his failure keenly, though, with his usual consideration, he had tried to lessen the disadvantages of it

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in writing to his mother. The friend who enjoyed constant intercourse with him at the Bagni de Lucca in 1854 wrote at the time of his death: "Leighton longed for and desired success; but only in so far as he deserved it. When he was sharply checked in his upward career, he accepted the rebuke with humility, for he was a modest man." Mrs. Browning writes to Mrs. Jameson, May 6, 1896, from Paris: "Leighton has been cut up unmercifully by the critics, but bears on, Robert says, not without courage. That you should say his picture looked well, was comfort in the general gloom." Though those critics who were spokesmen for the envious among the artists seemed to revel in Leighton's disaster, he had many friends who took perhaps a too favourable view of the unfortunate picture. But neither excess of abusive ridicule, nor a too favourable view taken by intimate friends, could unduly influence Leighton himself—Leighton the actualist. He had a firm faith that in the *actual* it is man's lot to find the true and the really helpful. These words of his master, Steinle's, written to him in 1853, doubtless recurred to him, and he felt he must return to the Eternal City to be reinspired after his fall:—

I would rather remember that you will receive these lines in the Eternal City, that you are with our friend Rico, and that you are settling to work with renewed vitality and a pocketful of studies. In Cornelius, besides much that is stubborn, you will find so much that is admirable, and so much truly artistic greatness, that you will soon love him, for he is also of a truly childlike disposition, and much too good for Berlin, for which reason he has left the place. You lucky men who have crossed the Tiber—the Vatican of St. Peter, the Courts of St. Onofrio, the Villa Pamfili—where in the world is there anything like them? Where is there a town in which every stone has greater, more splendid things to tell us

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of every period? Where is there a place where the artist could soar higher than in Rome? Forget that you are practically in an island, and study your Rome; it is invaluable for one's whole life, which is otherwise so commonplace and so small. Your youth and courage—"the sparrow among the beans" ("Triton among the minnows")—need not be injured thereby; but, dear friend, you must become a man, and there is nothing great in the world that has been achieved except by taking pains. Addio, carissimo; greet Rico and the friends most heartily. My wife reciprocates your friendly greetings, and I remain, your devoted friend, STEINLE.

He travelled there *viâ* Frankfort to see Steinle, with whom he went to Meran, thence to Venice and Florence, then on to Rome.

FRANKFURT, BRAUSELER HOF,
August 24.

DEAREST MAMMA,—Being at last in Frankfurt, and having seen Steinle and his works, and, *en revanche*, shown him mine, I sit down to write to you. You will, I am sure, be glad to hear that he was much pleased with my drawings, that he liked the compositions, and what is more, gave me good advice about them. He also suggested to me to paint the little "Venus" rising out of the sea (from Anacreon), of which I have already made a sketch. My studies he seemed to think excellent; I gave him three of them; I was so charmed to see his dear face again, looking just the same as he always did, and when he showed me what he had been doing, I fairly set up the pipes. He took me in the afternoon to the Guaitas, who have a series of drawings by him from Clemens Brentano's poems; they are perfectly exquisite; the richness and variety of his imagination is something marvellous. Mr. Guaita, who is about to have them photographed for his friends, has kindly promised me a copy. To-morrow morning I am off for the Lake of Constance, whence through the Finstermünz to Meran, where I and Steinle part, though not till I have stayed there two or three days. To-day I shall go to Mr. Bolton and to Madame Beving to deliver your letter. Altogether Frankfurt has improved in appearance; it

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looks much more like a capital than it did formerly; new shops have sprung up, old ones are improved, and the whole town looks gay and busy; all this does not prevent it from being highly antipathetic to me, which is, I daresay, in some measure attributable to the hideous jargon that one hears wherever one turns. I have seen Gogel and Koch, who were both very civil, the former asking me to dine with him, which, however, I could not do, being already engaged to Steinle. And you, dearest Mamma, how are you? and Papa and the girls? Tell me all about them—write Venice p. restante.

God bless you, dear Mamma. Remember the boy.

I have had such a letter from Henry (Mr. Henry Greville); there never was anything like the tenderness of it—you would have been just enchanted.

VENICE, *September* 6.

I believe I told you in my last letter that I was going to spend a few days at Meran with Steinle. Now when I got there I found the place so beautiful and so healthy, and so rich in subjects for "my pencil," that I stayed *a week*, and this accounts for my being rather behindhand with this letter.

Steinle and I had rooms at a sort of hydropathic boarding-house, with splendid accommodation for bathing in the coldest possible mountain water, a convenience of which I availed myself daily to my great enjoyment.

I lived *comme les poules*. I was up at daybreak and a good bit before the sun (who takes a long time before he gets his nose into a valley) and went to bed very shortly after sunset; I worked and walked and ate and slept, that was my simple bill of fare. My good Steinle and myself got on, as of course, capitally. He is most affectionate and kind, and I have derived a good deal of artistic advantage from his intercourse even in that short time.

By-the-bye, before I left Frankfurt I received through H. Greville a letter from Mr. Harrison, secretary to Col. Phipps, asking me to go to the Palace to look at the canvas of the "Cimabue," which appeared to be defective in some parts; though what on

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earth can be the matter with it I don't know; at the same time I got another saying, that as I was not in England, there would be no necessity for me to make a special journey to England on that account, and merely wishing to know when I expected to return. I sent an appropriate answer, which I submitted to Henry Greville, and now am waiting for further instructions from Harrison here in Venice.

Writing of his delight in being again in Italy he adds:—

How I revelled in the first really Italian bit, the lake of Lugano! What an exquisite little picture it is with its villas and terraces, its cypresses and its oleanders, and the little town itself too! stretching its cool arcades along the blue margin of the water; a lovely drive along the lake took me to that of Como, and from thence I went by rail to Milan; stayed a day, went to the Scala, performance so bad I was obliged to leave the house, and now I am for a week in Venice gliding along in lazy gondolas, winking up at grey palaces and glittering domes. I suppose you won't leave Italy this time without seeing Venice once more, and feeding your eyes again on Titian and Bonifazio, Veronese and Tintoretto. By-the-bye, I am doing a sketch from a superb Bonifazio in the Academy here; yesterday I painted hard for six hours, so you see it is not *all* boats, and now I must close. I will write to you again from Florence, and I hope with a better pen. God bless you, Mammy, give my love to all from your loving boy.

To his father Leighton writes:—

FLORENCE, HÔTEL DU NORD,
25th September 1856.

About my pictures[1] I have heard (for Henry makes the Ellesmeres keep him *au courant*, which of course is very convenient for me) that they are pretty well hung, but that the "Romeo" is not seen very well owing to a defect in the lighting

[1] "Romeo," "Pan," and "Venus," being then exhibited at the yearly autumn Exhibition at Manchester.

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of the room. Lady E. said the "Pan" and "Venus" seemed to be very well painted, or something, but Lord Brackley thought them improper! Henry, of course, was furious at their prudishness. I don't for the life of me know where to have them sent to, nor can I know for the next three weeks about, as I must write to consult Henry and get his answer and then write to you, but surely there is time. You have, of course, received the letter in which I tell you that I *must* go to England at the beginning of November to see about my picture, but you need not be afraid about my having to do it over again; that would be a good joke; no artist ever yet was responsible *pro*spectively for what might happen to his picture; but it will be a frightful bore in the expense line coming back from Italy fairly swept out as I shall be. Were you so kind as to pay the rent for me as I asked you?

Translation.]

FLORENCE, 28*th September.*

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,—Well may you say that the Meran post is tardy, for I only received your dear letter of the 13th three days ago. Meanwhile you have probably long since received mine, in which I thanked you heartily for the beautiful coat received in Venice.

I have already stayed here in Florence eight days, and though I have not worked very arduously, I have yet thoroughly enjoyed myself, and also, I hope, learned something from the lovely things that I am seeing again here; meanwhile there remains much for me to see in the two days that I have still to stay, amongst others the Capella of Benozzo Gozzoli in the Palazzo Riccardi, a work which I love excessively. To see the old Florentine school again is a thing which always enchants me anew, for one can never be sated with seeing the noble sweetness, the childlike simplicity, allied with high manly feeling, which breathes in it. But I speak to you of plain things which you know far better than I. I am quite eager to see the new drawings at Fabiola, and I am much excited about those at Cologne; but the gods alone know when I shall see them.

On Wednesday I go to Rome, where I hope to see Rico;

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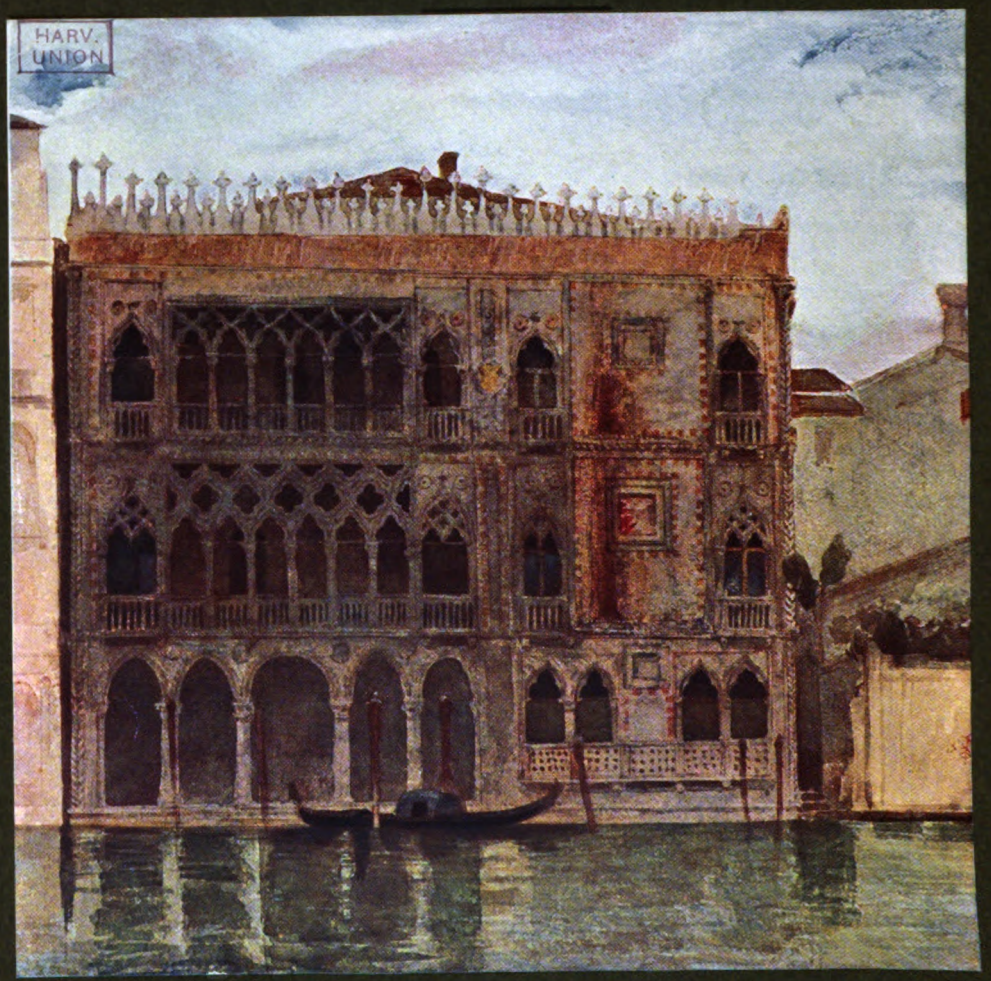

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CA' D'ORO, VENICE. WATER COLOUR. 1856

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if only I could take *you* with me, dear master! Meanwhile I beg you to remember me most kindly to Madame Steinle, and yourself believe in the love of your grateful pupil,

FRED LEIGHTON.

P.S.—My stay in Rome will (alas!) only be very short, for I am unexpectedly obliged to go soon to London, confound it!—instead of a month, *ten* days! *Povero me!*

FLORENCE, 11*th October* 1856.

DEAREST MAMMY,—I wonder whether you are coming to Florence, and, if so, how long you are going to stay. I suppose you will go to the Hôtel du Nord as in old times—I go there invariably, and write now from my own particular room. I wrote to you last from Venice, where I spent ten days in a very satisfactory manner between work and *flânerie* of an artistic description—indeed I *flâned* this time with more advantage than hitherto, for I went more closely than I had yet done into the *architecture* of Venice, studying the different masters, their different styles and relative merit; I need not say that I found this extremely interesting. Fred Cockerell, a young architect friend of mine, was there with Villers Lister, another very nice boy, a London acquaintance of mine. We were a great deal together, and they accompanied me to Padua, where I left them doing *Giotto*, which I would most willingly have done myself if I had not been hard pressed for time. In the painting line I only made one sketch, a Bonifazio of the first water, which will figure very satisfactorily on my studio wall; it took me a good deal of time, and is on the whole, I think, very fair. In Florence I have had one or two great disappointments which have rather diminished my enjoyment of this loveliest place. I expected confidently to find both Browning and his wife and Lyons. Neither of them are here, the former not having yet returned from the North, and the latter having been called home to see his father, who is very ailing. I have seen the Fenzis, who received me with their wonted cordiality, and am going to-day to call on the Maquays. I am here too short a time to work, beyond a pencil sketch or two, and am off for dear old Rome on Friday

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morning as ever is. I shall stay there till I find a studio, which I hope won't be long, and shall then rush off to Cervara in the mountains to paint.

Good-bye, Mammikins. Give my best love to all, and believe me your loving boy, FRED.

In Rome Leighton received the following from his friend Mr. Cartwright:—

AYNHOE, *September* 26, 1856.

MY DEAR LEIGHTON,—Truly was I delighted with your letter, so that in spite of my "nature to" I gulped my huff, though I was like to choke; but self-interest is a wonderful smoothener, and as I want you to do something for me I mean to behave myself. Leighton, by the squints which you shot over my park from your outspread umbrella, by those you are hereafter to shoot, by Tokay cup and venison hash—by anything you like, I want you to belumber yourself with some ripe *stone pinecones*, and a hundred cork acorns. I have found a *true* legitimate stone pine about forty to fifty feet high on my property, and as for the cork trees you have seen the one in my garden, and therefore I do not see why I should not have a lot in the park. They can only be raised from acorns. Now, *if* you could take steps to get me *these* things—God! I don't know what I would not do for you, and how would we enjoy it in years to come to watch the growth of our trees. It is a *national* object. You may have some difficulty in getting the acorns and cones; Pantaleone or Erhardt might perhaps mention to you some gardener who would procure them. *You* know probably the trees would get to be called L. pines and Leighton oaks, which is one way to immortality if Orpheus and Eurydices won't help you. I wrote to Mason about the pines; by all means *make* him answer, the exertion will do him good, he *wants* exercise, and therefore don't get on with his work. My God! when I came in at twelve to-day he was not up!

How I envy you at Rome when I think of it; how would I *enjoy* being there, and yet I can't help thinking of ——'s death at the same time. Remember me to little Cornhill and every Roman who remembers me. Write Poste Restante, Paris. I go there, I believe, next week, but *where* I shall be the winter ——? Forster

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is in the Westminster—be d——d to it for stale wine that it is. As for Mason, make him write, and believe me, yours affectionately,

W. C. C.

ROME, *October* 14, 1856.

DEAREST MAMMA,—I have delayed writing to you for a few days in the hope of finding a letter from you in answer to my last; however, as the posts here are frightfully irregular, and I think it very possible your answer may have been lost, I wait no longer. I enclose two little criticisms on my "Romeo" and "Venus," which will I think please Papa and you, and which were sent me through Mrs. Sartoris by Henry Greville.[1] There is,

[1] "368. *From Keats' Ode to Pan, in the 'Endymion'*: F. Leighton.—Flesh painting is the grand test. With the majority of artists the attempt results in a something very much resembling tinted marble. Not so Mr. Leighton. This enchanting creation of his mind glows with the rich warm hues of life; and the sweeping outline which gives such beauty to the female form is preserved with subdued definiteness. The background is a fine piece of mellow autumnal tinting.

"*The Royal Institution.*—In the second room will be found one of the very best, if not the best picture in the exhibition, No. 183, 'Reconciliation of the Montagues and Capulets,' by F. Leighton. Whatever its other merits or faults may be, it tells the sad story clearly and forcibly. The scene is 'the tomb of all the Capulets,' and the moment chosen by the artist is when the heads of the rival houses, standing by the dead bodies of those in whom all their hopes had been centred, agree to lay by their ancient feuds, and clasp their hands in sign of future friendship.

"'*Capulet*—O brother Montague, give me thy hand:
This is my daughter's jointure, for no more
Can I demand.
Montague—But I can give thee more:
For I will raise her statue in pure gold:
That while Verona by that name is known
There shall no figure at such rate be set,
As that of true and faithful Juliet.'

In the foreground are the bodies of the lovers, placed on a bier. Juliet has thrown herself upon the body of Romeo, her hands clasped around his neck, and her cheek touching his. In that position, typical of her undying love, the fatal potion has done its work. Lady Capulet, in a paroxysm of maternal grief, has thrown herself on her knees at the foot of the bier; behind her is the Friar. Opposite the spectator are old Capulet and Montague, their aged forms bowed with grief, in the act of reconciliation. These are the principal figures. The Prince, attendants, &c., fill up, without crowding, the picture. The gloom of the ancient

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however, not the remotest chance of my selling them at Manchester, and I am considering where to show them next. I am trying here in Rome (where I shall stay till the end of October)

monument is capitally rendered, the colouring is harmonious, and the disposition of the figures careful and dramatic. The artist has admirably discriminated the characters of the two aged noblemen. Readers of Shakespeare will not need to be reminded of the distinction which the dramatist has made between the two. Montague appears only in the first and last acts, but displays great resolution, accompanied by a noble moderation, in the brawl commenced by the retainers of each of the houses. The language put into his mouth is noble and poetical, especially in concluding his account of the black and portentous humour which had overtaken his son.

"'But he, his own affection's counsellor,
Is to himself,—I will not say—how true,—
But to himself so secret and so close,
So far from sounding and discovery
As is the bud, bit with an envious worm,
Ere he can spread his sweet leaves to the air,
Or dedicate his beauty to the sun.'

No such language as this is ever given to old Capulet. On the contrary, he is fussy, shallow, and pretentious. Even the Nurse snubs him. In the first act he rushes out frantically calling for his sword, to which Lady Capulet replies—

"'A crutch, a crutch!—why call you for a sword?'

And the Nurse on another occasion says—

"'Go, go, you cot quean, go,
Get you to bed; faith you will be sick to-morrow
For this night's watching.'

The artist has finely distinguished the two men; there is no mistaking them. On the other hand, if we may 'hint a fall' or two, we should say, that the faces of the lovers are too livid and corpse-like. They are but newly dead, and the artist would have been truer to nature and increased the beauty of his picture if he had allowed some of the beauty of life to linger around them. The attitude of the Friar, too, with elevated arms and appalled look, is not in harmony with the grand composure of his demeanour at all other times, the noble motives from which he had acted, and that sanctity of character which induces the Prince to say to him, after his explanatory speech—

"'We still have known thee for a holy man.'

With all drawbacks, however, this is a noble picture; and if our readers will turn to the scene in the play and refresh their memories before going to the Institution, they will, we think, agree with us in ranking it as a successful Shakesperian illustration—high praise, but deserved."

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to make up by rigid economy for the expense inevitably incurred by living at inns all the way here. I can't tell you what a delight it was to me to see this dear old place again. Everything is so unaltered since I left it, that I felt on returning exactly as if I was coming home from a drive instead of a lengthened absence. The frescoes which I knew so well were as new to me again from their colossal grandeur, and I wished I could spend a month or so exclusively copying in the Sixtina. My picture, though not well *seen*, is not particularly badly *hung*, but it can only be seen from a distance, so that the expressions are almost entirely lost; it does not look so well as in my studio. The Pre-Raphaelites are very striking, full of talent and industry, but unpleasant to the eye. Meanwhile they have the day. Colnaghi told me that he *thought* he could sell "Romeo" if I made the price *four hundred*, and said I could do it without derogating, as it went through his, a dealer's, hands. I consulted Henry and Mrs. S., who strongly advised me to follow his advice. I have done so. May it bring me luck. If the remarks you quote, dear Mamma, are meant to apply to my relation with Mrs. Sartoris, I can only say, that as I have derived from her more moral improvement and refinement (you know it), and from her circle more intellectual advantage than from *all my other acquaintances* put together twice over, I can't join with Mrs. Whatshername in apprehending "a great number of inconveniences."

In a later letter Leighton announces the sale of the "Romeo" picture:—

The "Romeo," which had the best place in the Exhibition, has been sold for £400, which to me represents £360 after deduction of percentage. They have in a most slovenly way sold my picture for pounds though marked *guineas*, they want to know if I claimed the difference; as they have behaved without sufficient *égard* about other things also, I have directed the secretary in England to say that I should like the error to be rectified, though I do *not* wish the sale to be cancelled on that account if it be too late. I don't want to miss the money of course, but I have no idea of such negligence on their part.

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You see, dear Mamma, that my little pension to Lud has become, for this year at least, so easy that I have scarcely any merit left.

19 QUEEN STREET, MAYFAIR.

DEAREST MAMMA,—Having arrived in London, and been to the Palace to see my picture, I hasten both to tell you the result of my inspection and to answer your very kind letter to Paris which, like an ass that I am, I have neglected to bring with me. The damage to my picture is trifling and easily remediable, having arisen in no way from the precarious nature of paint or varnish, but from a faulty canvas, and probable rough usage in moving. I shall set all right in a few days; the holes or raw places are in the sky, and luckily not near the faces. I have not yet seen Colonel Phipps, and am waiting for further instructions; the Court I shall of course not see, as it is at Windsor.

I don't remember whether I told you that I got an invitation from Manchester to exhibit next spring, and having nothing to send but "Cimabue," have respectfully applied to the Queen through Colonel Phipps to obtain it of her for that occasion.

I am truly sorry not to see you all, but as you say, I can't afford it; indeed, I write now partly to ask Papa to send me some money, the £50 he gave me in the middle of August when I started are not only gone, but scarcely took me back to Paris, and but for Petre, whom I met coming back from Naples, and who lent me a trifle with most friendly alacrity, I should have been frightfully pinched; the first part of my journey being all travelling, and hotel life was very dear. In Rome, however, I lived for nothing, and sailed from Civita Vecchia to Marseilles "before the mast," a thing I will never do again if I can help it, but which enabled me just to get home to Paris within a few francs of the £50. Meanwhile I have no hesitation in saying that I never spent three months more profitably or more agreeably. I suppose Papa kindly paid my last quarter as I asked him, but not having received your letter I don't in reality know.

P. Delaroche is dead, I am sorry to say. Going through Paris I went to see Rob. Fleury, who with characteristic kindness put me up to several dodges in picture-restoring with a reference to "Cimabue"—invaluable information.

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After doing what was required to the Buckingham Palace picture, Leighton returned to Paris, where he wrote the following to Steinle:—

Translation.]

21 RUE PIGALE, *1st December.*

DEAR FRIEND AND MASTER,—I read with real distress the sad news of your severe loss, but sincere and deep as is my sympathy, I pass on in silence, for in such an hour of trial there is but one comfort for you, and that not from man.

I should no doubt have come back to you from Rome in the beginning of October, but I had to go to England, where I spent three weeks, and am consequently now just established again in Paris. My Italian journey afforded me in every way the greatest pleasure and edification, and I seem now for the first to have grasped the greatness of the Campagna and the giant loftiness of Michael Angelo; still the dear old town, now as ever, is quite unchanged. The good Cornelius is so cheerful and friendly that it is a real pleasure; he has finished some works which have much beauty in the design, but, quite in confidence, they are nevertheless a trifle "solite cose," and much too weakly drawn: from a man who makes claims to style, one expects something more of solidity. Cornelius is a richly and powerfully endowed man, but he does the young generation no good; if young people would only look at work of Michael Angelo's! I except the sculptor Willig, he is a famous fellow, and also an agreeable man. I was glad to meet Gamba again, but unfortunately I did not see any work of his.

Dear Friend, in spite of all my efforts I could nowhere find the right garment for your composition, and learnt only after a long search what is properly the official dress; I learnt at last from the custodian of the Sixtina, who inquired from the head "Ceremoniere," that the cardinal in these days wears the Cappa Magna *pavonazza*, not the *red*.[1] The costume therefore

[1] Among the drawings sold by the Fine Art Society in 1897 was a very striking and interesting sketch in water-colour by Steinle. The subject was a peasant confessing to a Cardinal. May be it was the sketch for this picture for which Steinle asked Leighton to help him respecting the cardinal's costume.

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is: purple undergarment, *lace shirt* (rochetto), cappa magna of violet *cloth* (those in the *Charwache* will wear no *silk*), black shoes, four-cornered hood, and gloves with the ring; I enclose a drawing of the real confessional in St. Peter's Church; I hope it may be of use to you. Dear master, how can you possibly *excuse* yourself for closing your letter with a word of true and wise advice! You know that I owe to you, and to no one else, the whole of my serious education, and am proud of it.

If you do not get the work at Cologne, it will be a downright infamy and a dirtiness without parallel; but I hope for the best.

How I should like to see your "Marriage at Cana."

Keep in remembrance your loving pupil,

FRED LEIGHTON.

Translation.]

Saturday, 9th May 1857.

MY DEAR FRIEND AND MASTER,—Your letter, just received, has given me intense pleasure. Your constant and affectionate remembrance of a pupil who is under so many obligations to you, rejoices my heart. On this occasion, however, your letter was particularly welcome, because I had already begun to worry myself a little about your long silence, and was almost afraid you might imagine that I had not exerted myself sufficiently in the matter of your cardinal.

But first of all I offer my best congratulations on the completion of the Cologne affair, and on the splendid field which is offered to you also in Münster. At last you have work which is worthy of your abilities and your efforts, and will give them scope. With such employment I must not regret that I shall not have the pleasure of seeing you again in Paris. That I have not seen the "Marriage of Cana" is, I candidly confess, a source of regret to me; I know the design of the composition, and should have liked extremely to have seen how it has turned out. When shall I see one of your works again?

What shall I tell you about myself, my dear friend? I am getting on with my pictures, and have now got them all three into a fairly forward state of *under*-painting; completion, however, will only be reached in the course of next winter, for I intend to execute them with minute care. I have

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simplified my method of painting, and foresworn all *tricks*. I endeavour to advance from the beginning as much as possible, and equally try to mix the right tint, and slowly and carefully to put it on the right spot, and *always* with the model before me; what does not exactly suit has to be adapted; one can derive benefit from every head. Schwind says that he cannot work from models, they *worry* him! a splendid teacher for his pupils! nature worries every one at first, but one must so discipline oneself that, instead of checking and hindering, she shall illuminate and help, and solve all doubts. Has Schwind, with his splendid and varied gifts, ever been able to model a head with a brush? Those who place the brush behind the pencil, under the pretence that *form* is before all things, make a very great mistake. Form *is certainly* ALL *important;* one cannot study it enough; *but* the greater part of *form* falls within the province of the tabooed *brush*. The everlasting hobby of *contour* (which belongs to the drawing material) is first the *place* where the *form* comes in; what, however, reveals true knowledge of form, is a powerful, organic, refined finish of modelling, full of feeling and knowledge—and that is the affair of the brush (*Pinsel*).

You see I have again begun discoursing, my dear Master; you must excuse all this silly talk, and ascribe it to the pleasure I feel whenever I enjoy intercourse with you, even if only by letter. How much we have already talked over together!

And now adieu, dear Friend. Rest assured that you have not wasted your affection on an ungrateful man, and keep always in remembrance—Your faithful pupil, LEIGHTON.

Please remember me most kindly to your wife.

I do not know of any work of mine that has appeared in an illustrated paper—Louie has been dreaming.

Three interesting letters to Steinle belong to the following year. In the second Leighton states that he is about to start for Algiers. After his arrival there he writes to his mother describing the place. Notwithstanding the difficulty he found in drawing the natives of Algiers, owing

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to their shyness and to their prejudices, Leighton succeeded while there in making drawings which rank among his very best; in fact, in certain qualities no others he ever drew can be said to equal them. To quote Mr. Pepys Cockerell (*Nineteenth Century*, November 1896):—

"I do not believe that more perfect drawings, better defined or more entirely realised, than these studies of heads of Moors, camels, &c., were ever executed by the hand of man."

Unfortunately the paper Leighton used was of the kind which becomes injured by time. The brown stains which now disfigure the sheets and the faint tone of the pencilling make it impossible to reproduce these drawings with any worthy result, but some of the original sketches can be seen in the Leighton House Collection.

Translation.]

ROME, 11 VIA DELLA PURIFICAZIONE,
March 3, 1857.

MY VERY DEAR MASTER, — Heartiest thanks for your kind lines of the 3rd of last month.

I hear with the greatest interest that your cartoon is now finished, and that you expect to get to the wall next year. How I envy you this great work! I cannot deny that I rejoice a little, secretly, that you are tied down to *buon* fresco, for I have a passion (unfortunately an altogether unsatisfied one) for this material. You may be quite sure that if it is in any way possible for me, I shall make a little excursion to Cologne in order to offer my humble assistance; nothing could be more delightful to me.

Some works of yours have just come to Rome; illustrations to a prayer-book, engraved (I believe) by Keller. When did you make these charming drawings? The one with the blossoming staff and the little Madonna is quite specially sympathetic to me. The things are, however, engraved without feeling or delicacy.

With what you say about the advantage of growing older I

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quite agree, and I am in a certain respect anxious for the time when I shall find my *niveau*, and shall be able to work with more peace and equanimity. I have been for some time in a very painful position—I feel so humbly my incapacity even from afar off to approach the entrancing beauty of nature, that I have not the courage to embark upon any large work. For some time I have scarcely composed at all; partly, it is true, because I have no time, but partly also because I do not feel myself in a position to embody an idea properly. I know that such a condition is morbid, and hope to extricate myself from it in time. It arises also partly from the fact that my *individuality* is not yet sufficiently developed; I see it coming, but it takes a very long time. I know already, on the smallest computation, *what* I want, but I do not know *how* I am to accomplish it.

I went recently to see Cornelius, who is always genial and charming. He is drawing on one of the Redelli for the Campo Santo. Rich and spirited in invention and arrangement, the form in *details*, however, is very badly drawn—heads that are unpermissible; he treats God's nature quite cavalierly. I saw at his house a composition by a certain Wöredle (or some such name) of Vienna, a pupil of Führich, the subject taken from the Apocalypse: "There shall be wonders." Above, the Saviour, in the usual attitude, with the usual flowing garment; to the right and left, Mary and John, in their respective usual attitudes; at their feet four angels blowing trumpets, by Cornelius; in the background a number of comets; lying about in the middle and foreground, a quantity of figures, which have been collected from different works of Cornelius', strike convulsive attitudes on the floor; for the rest, the whole is constructed with appalling academic execution and lifelessness. Cornelius seemed to think it quite right; I consider it difficult, with reverence and love, to complete the head of one girl; for that reason I am not fond of going to him, for although personally he is extremely sympathetic to me, I cannot help feeling that I do not fit in with him, and am obliged to dissemble. But you must be quite weary of this chattering letter, dear Master; I will close. Remember me most kindly to your wife and children, and rely always upon the friendship of your grateful pupil, LEIGHTON.

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Translation.]

Thursday, September 3, 1857.

DEAR FRIEND AND MASTER,—I was, as usual, most delighted to receive your cordial letter of 21st August; I am touched by your constant friendship, but also somewhat ashamed that you should treat your much indebted pupil almost as an equal and counsellor. I have the greatest desire to see your second cartoon, but I am very much afraid that this year it will be quite impossible, for I am going on a journey in quite the opposite direction; I am shortly going to Africa, partly to make some landscape studies, but also to make acquaintance with that very interesting race, but *not* in order to become a painter of Bedouins. It was my intention, as I am starting immediately, not to write till I came back, in order that I might have something to tell you; however, the following has suddenly made me change my mind; the fat, affected, tailor-like, civil-spoken little Jew visited me recently and told me you want to make inquiries about wall painting, and that I might tell you, if I was writing, that Couture has just gone away. This impelled me to write immediately. Will you forgive me, for old friendship's sake, if I put in a word here, to which you need not give the smallest attention? I want to protest vehemently, dear Master, against all *oil*-painting on *walls;* and that, not because fresco painting has sufficed for the greatest works of the greatest masters, but on account of the *positive disadvantages* of oils. How, in effect, do the two materials stand to one another? Fresco is certainly the one material for monuments. First, because it is the most suitable for a broad, massy, imposing *form*, for in no material can one pursue form so completely *without losing colour;* secondly, because by no other method can one attain such masterly, earnest, quiet, virile effect in colour; thirdly, however, and principally, because fresco *is visible from all points alike*, this advantage is immeasurable for architectural art. What, on the other hand, are the advantages of oil? Only one occurs to me and that is quite illusory, *i.e.* you have a wider range of colour; but all the colours that an oil palette has in advance of fresco are, for fresco, superfluous if not pernicious. Superfluous, because the broken, fine grey tones

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which have such an infinite charm in easel pictures, and which counteract the otherwise too great brilliance of the material, are quite superfluous in a painting where *all tones* are dull and solid. Pernicious, where they would be applicable, because they might mar the majestic peace of the work. And then it should be remembered that the limited scale of the fresco palette, *so far as it extends*, is unsurpassable for glow and atmosphere and strength. Titian's frescoes at Padua in the Tenola St. Antonio rival his oil-paintings in colour. M. Angelo's "Madonna in the Last Judgment" might (for colour) be by Tintoretto, and many figures on this glorious wall are as glowing as Titian's! As regards the disadvantages of oil-painting, I can only say that they often blister in the shadows, and that one can *only see them from one point of view*. I know very well that fresco is exposed to damp, but one can, indeed one must, have one's wall examined before one begins to work, and if it is well dried and "drained" there is no danger; at the worst, one can cover one's wall with sheets of lead; it has been discovered that this was often done in Pompeii. Or one can also (there are instances) paint upon a specially prepared canvas away from the wall. But you know all this better than I. Have you forgiven me, dear Friend? I could not forbear from saying this, and rely upon your indulgence.

Do not allow Schlösser to mislead you about my work. I daub on steadily, but am by a very long way not contented.

I send these lines to Frankfurt in the hope that they will be forwarded to you.

I shall stay some weeks in Algiers—can I do anything for you? in that case send me a line. Till the *1st October* a letter will find me; address, Poste Restante, Algiers.

All good luck be with you on your holidays, and may you gain the desired strength.

Keep in remembrance your loving pupil,

FRED LEIGHTON.

21 RUE PIGALLE.

ALGIERS, *Friday*, 18*th*.

DEAREST MAMMA,—I arrived here only last Monday, as the little delay about the money made me lose the boat by which

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I intended to sail; having, however, nothing in my studio that was dry enough or otherwise fit to work on, I left Paris all the same and visited Avignon, Nîmes, and Arles, most interesting towns which I had long desired to see. Avignon reminded me so vividly of certain parts of Rome that it was all I could do not to take a place for Civita Vecchia and succumb to my longing desire to see Italy once more.

I have not the least idea (especially in this hot weather) how to describe to you this strange and picturesque town in which I have taken up my temporary quarters; everything where the African element has been preserved is so entirely new, so unlike anything that you have seen, that I see no chance of putting before your mind any living image of the thing. Before going further I may as well tell you, dearest Mammy, that although it is very hot I am perfectly well and have an enormous appetite. I walk from six to eight hours every day, and bathe regularly in the sea.

Algiers occupies one horn of a most beautiful bay, thickly studded with villas and farms, and reminding one greatly of Italy. The aspect of the town, however, shows you at once, and from a great distance, that you are in no European land. You must know that oriental houses have no roofs, but are surmounted by terraces, that they have no windows, the rooms being lit from the inner court, and that they are painted three times a year of the purest white, so that on approaching Algiers, rising as it does steeply up the hillside, it looks from the sea and under an African sun like a pyramid of alabaster or marble, or, as some poet or other has said of it, like a swan about to spread her wings. The effect of this whiteness glittering out from the green and purple hills and hanging over a dark-blue sea is really most beautiful; unfortunately, however, the whole of the lower part of the town that runs along the port has been so completely Europeanized that, but for a rather pretty mosque on the waterside, you might fancy you were at Havre or any other French seaport town. As soon, however, as you get up into the Arab town, your illusions are not only restored but enhanced, for assuredly nothing could be more perfectly picturesque and striking than the steep, tortuous streets that climb up to the

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SKETCH IN OILS. ALGIERS. 1895

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Casbah, or fortress, at the top of the town. The upper storeys of the houses jut out into the street in such a manner that they constantly meet, forming an archway underneath, and yet the streets are never dark, from the dazzling whiteness of all the walls, which reflect the light in every direction and gild and brighten the darkest corners. Fancy, in the midst of all this gleaming white, the gorgeous effect produced by the varied colours of oriental costumes and complexion: the copper-coloured Arabs, the sallow Jews, the ebony negroes; and then the frequent display of every kind of fruit—crimson tomatoes and purple aubergines, emerald and golden melons, glowing oranges, luminous green grapes, and to relieve the blaze of ardent colour, the tender ivory tones of the tuberose, and the soft milk-white jessamine. I don't think a colourist could have a more precious lesson than seeing this place; you see in half-an-hour a sufficient number of fine harmonies to set you up for a year. Not less striking than the display of colour is the variety of types and costumes. Arabs of the desert, with their lofty bearing and ample drapery, the tattered, brawny Kabyles, the richly dressed Jewesses, the negresses, dressed in long indigo-coloured draperies, and with bracelets of horn round their ankles; in fact, you cannot imagine a greater medley than is presented by a street in the Arab quarter of the town. It has this drawback, that in the midst of such an *embarras de richesses*, I don't know how I shall ever be able to work; as yet I have not seen a pencil even, indeed I have not been off my feet since I arrived, and my head is in a perfect muddle. I spend next week in the interior of the country, and when I come back I shall have a fortnight in which I hope to do something. Getting anybody to sit here is exceedingly difficult, and costs mints. The price of living here is the same as Paris, but anything at all extra is very dear; a horse or a cab to get to some place beyond a walk is very expensive, and my consumption of drink (lemonade, coffee, &c., for pure water is not wholesome here) from six in the morning till bedtime is something incredible. Goodbye, dearest Mother, I will write a longer letter next time. I have no news from India. Best love to all, from your most affectionate boy.

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If you hear from Lina, *mind* you let me know, as I am most anxious for news.

I am so sorry the ink is so pale. I have written over half the letter, but it is not much use; next time I will have darker ink.

ALGIERS, *Monday* 29, 1857.

DEAREST MAMMA,—Poor Lina,[1] what a state of wretched suspense and terror she must live in! what a frightful crisis it is! God grant all may end well. Have you heard lately? Pray let me know whatever you can; at this distance I can get only the most salient facts, and am most eager to hear some more circumstantial account of the progress of affairs. Poor Sutherland, I often think of his kind grey eyes and manly carriage; what a harassing, anxious life he must lead!

Before I go any further I must ensure saying a thing that I have been intending to tell for some time past, and which has always been driven out of my head by the more immediate subject of my letter. I am by no means certain that I have not already mentioned it; I wish to be quite certain. The fact is that as besides corresponding with you I write often to Mrs. Sartoris, and still oftener to Henry Greville, and have continually much the same to tell all of you, I often cannot remember to whom I have written what, and I am therefore uncertain whether I told you that Romeo and Juliet and Pan and Venus are by this time exciting (let us hope) the admiration of the citizens of America at the town of Philadelphia. It costs me nothing at all either to send or to fetch, and the percentage is ten per cent. I sent them off the end of last month, just before leaving Paris for Africa. Tom Taylor is on the committee, and I think the speculation may turn out good, particularly if Mrs. Kemble, who is in America now, takes an interest in them.

Putting aside all question of anxiety and sorrow, I am delighted with my visit to Algiers. I feel that, though I have as yet been unable to touch a pencil, I have already taken a great deal of new stuff, and if I were to leave Africa with an empty sketch-book, I should still return to my easel improved in knowledge

[1] Mrs. S. Orr was in India, the Mutiny taking place at that time.

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SKETCH IN OILS. ALGIERS. 1895

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of form and combination of colours. Still it is a great mortification to me to see such fine types around me without any means of getting them to sit, an operation to which they have an insuperable objection; if it were not vexatious, it would be quite amusing to see how they slink away when they perceive you are trying to sketch them.

Of course, one of my great desires was to see if possible a Moorish *intérieur;* and in this, though it is difficult to achieve, I have been very fortunate, through the instrumentality of a young native, with whom I became accidentally acquainted. I have made the acquaintance of one Achmet, son of Ali Pasha, a decayed native gentleman, now holding office in the French customs, but once very well to do in the world. I have been twice to his house, which I may as well describe to you, as it is a type of all Moorish houses in this part of the world. The whole of the centre of the building is taken up by a little *cortile,* open to the sky and surrounded by two storeys of arcades of a graceful shape, on to which the rooms open as in Greek houses. These arcades are painted pure white, and are relieved by fillets of coloured porcelain tiles that have a most original and charming effect; the first-floor gallery is closed in by a breast-high balustrade, elegantly carved and painted blue or green; the top of the house is invariably an open terrace, adorned with flowers and shrubs. The rooms, I said, open on the corridors and have no windows (except little peeping holes) on to the street; they are consequently always wrapped in a sort of clear, cool, reflected twilight that is inexpressibly delightful and soothing in hot, glaring weather. Each room takes up one side of the house, and is therefore a long narrow strip; immediately opposite the door is an alcove, containing a raised, handsomely cushioned and carpeted divan, and ornamented invariably with three florid gilt looking-glasses. At the foot of the raised divan is another lower one for those who like low seats; other such divans run along the wall, and a few highly wrought, embossed chests and other oriental articles of furniture complete the decoration of the room. In such a room Achmet Oulid received us, putting before us delicious hot coffee in tiny cups with filagree stands, a delightful kind of peach jam, and the pipe of peace. You would have laughed to see your

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son lolling on a Turkey carpet and puffing away at a long pipe. Our host has the dearest little daughter, ten years old, whom by a great stretch of courtesy we were allowed to see. By-the-bye, nearly all Arab children are lovely, and look great darlings in their Turkish dress.

My paper is coming to an end and the boat does not wait, so I close. I shall write you another letter before I leave this and tell you more of what I have done and seen.

Good-bye, dearest Mammy.

Leighton refers to this visit in a letter to Mrs. Mark Pattison (1879), who was about to write an account of his art. "This visit made a deep impression on me; I have loved 'The East,' as it is called, ever since. By-the-bye, I drew here my (almost) only large water-colour drawing 'A Negro Festival' (the picture Leighton always referred to as 'The Niggers'), which was thought very well of by my friends."

To his sister in India he wrote:—

Since I last wrote I have spent a month or six weeks in Algeria, and have opened an acquaintance with the East which I hope to keep up, not only from the pleasure but from the instruction I have derived from even a short visit. My next journey, however, will be to the old, original cradle of Western Art—to Egypt, which country, as I shall visit it under widely different circumstances from what you did, poor dear, and I trust in much better health, will of course strike me in a very different manner. There are many things in the Arab quarter in Algiers which will probably stand comparison with Cairo, but besides that, Egypt has far more physiognomy as a country than the coast of Algeria. I am anxious to study the Egyptian type, which is truly grand and wonderful. However, these are plans for a tolerably remote day, as I shall spend my next winter in my dear, dear old Rome, to which I am attached beyond measure; indeed, Italy altogether has a hold on my heart that no other country ever can have (except, of course, my own); and although, as I just now said, I was most delighted with Africa,

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and have not a moment to look back to that was not agreeable, yet there is an intimate little corner in my affections into which it could never penetrate. If I am as faithful to my wife as I am to the places I love, I shall do very well. What the first impression of an Eastern country is, you already know by experience as far as the mere aspect goes, but to understand my sensations you must translate your own into a far brighter key. In my case everything was for me: a decent passage, a glorious day, a light heart, and a firm determination to enjoy myself; to this add that more rapid apprehension of what is beautiful which belongs to an artist's eye, and is the natural consequence of the constant exercise and cultivation of that faculty.

I saw in Algiers many things that interested me, very much *du point de vue mœurs fêtes*, with strange music on queer instruments, odd dances, odder singing. The music of the Moors is altogether very strange; it is monotonous in the extreme, fitful, and sometimes apparently without any kind of shape, and yet there is something very characteristic and almost attaching about it. This applies only to instrumental music, for as for the voice, they seem to consider it only as a shriller instrument, using always at full pitch, with neck outstretched and eyes half shut, always from the throat and always higher than they can go. It is very strange that a nation which attained once so high a pitch of civilisation, should either never have known or have entirely forgotten that the human voice is capable of inflection, and what an all-powerful vehicle it may be made of every passionate sentiment or soothing influence. However, much the same thing is noticeable in the peasants near Rome, whose songs consist (within a definite shape) of long-sustained chest notes that are peculiar in the extreme, and though often harsh seem to be wonderfully in harmony with the long unbroken lines of the Campagna.

À propos of chanting, I saw a very striking thing one day in Algiers, in the shape of a Rhapsodist, who recited, with an uncouth instrumental accompaniment, a long string of strophes describing (I am told) the life and deeds of some hero; it was exactly what a recital of the Homeric poems must have been amongst the early Greeks. The Homer stood up in the midst of a motley and most picturesque group of breathless listeners, and chanted, with a sort

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of animated monotony, verses of about two lines each, heightening the colour of his tale by gesticulations. After each strophe the music struck in, consisting of two queerly shaped tambours and a shrill flute. After the performance, or rather, during the pauses, money was collected in the tambourines. Homer (if he ever lived) no doubt did the same.

On his return to Paris Leighton wrote to Steinle :—

Translation.]

PARIS, *October* 22, 1857.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,—Since I know your industry better than any one else, and also know that at this moment you are quite particularly busy, I cannot be surprised that you have not answered my letter of last month ; however, some warm expressions slipped from me in that letter which you may perhaps have taken amiss ; lest this should be indeed the case, I hasten, my dear Master, to make you an ample apology and to beg you not to take amiss what I may have said too hastily ; but if it is not so, do send me a short note that my doubt may be solved ; for it is an excessively painful idea to me that a single word from my mouth should have displeased you.

I have just come back from Africa, where I have spent some weeks with extreme pleasure, and, I believe, not without great benefit ; indeed, I might say that an artist cannot perfect his sense of form so well anywhere as in the East ; the types of characteristic stamp which meet one's eye at every step are a wonder to see, and of the simple grandeur of the costumes one can form no previous conception—one sees real Michael Angelos running about the streets.

I have done little or almost nothing, for one cannot possibly induce the Arabs to sit ; however, I believe I have learnt a great deal by my observations ; I have already made a resolution to become acquainted with the Egyptian race in the near future. But now I must see to it that I produce something this winter, for time goes bye with giant strides, and will not be called back again.

And you, my dear friend ? what are you working at now ? How

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I should like to see your second cartoon! but unfortunately that is one of the impossibilities. What has happened about the church you were to paint? Has anything been settled? Once more I beg you to write me a few lines to assure me that you are not angry at my indiscretion.

Please remember me most kindly to your wife. And keep in kindly remembrance, your grateful pupil, LEIGHTON.

And again :—

Translation.]

PARIS, 21 RUE PIGALLE,
November 2, 1857.

DEAR FRIEND AND MASTER,—All my best thanks for your kind letter, and for the enclosed photograph of your splendid cartoon; there is no need for me to tell you how greatly this has rejoiced and delighted me; by now you know that beforehand regarding every work of Steinle's (Steinleischen Arbeit), and in no work more than in this do I recognise the fulness and the brilliance of your fancy; meanwhile (as is only human) my joy is a trifle damped by the overwhelming desire to know the complete composition, and then to see the original itself. How glad I am that at last you have a worthy task!

It was a great relief to me to find that you did not take amiss what I wrote about wall painting, and that you quite understood that I could only become so wrathful regarding a matter which interests me in the highest degree. I wish with all my heart that you may discover something which will fill all requirements, while at the same time, as a bigoted frescoist, I shake my head a little at your heresy. You will certainly find me dreadfully stiff-necked, dear Friend! That is because lately I have seen fresco painting much nearer, and have compared it with oil painting directly beside it; I cannot deny that in colour I find it immeasurably more frank and stronger than its oil-neighbour, which appears muddy and dull next it. True, Cennini mentions wall painting, but only supplementarily, and after he has written at length of *buon peseo.* I certainly fall into his views again!

Now, adieu, my dear friend; once more all my best thanks;

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you may rely upon it, that the very first thing of mine that is photographed shall immediately find its way to you at Frankfurt; meantime, I candidly confess to you that I am quite terribly dissatisfied with my performances, and could only submit a hasty work to you.

Think often of your most devoted pupil,

FRED LEIGHTON.

(Written below by Steinle)
Answered, 4th June 1858.

The following letters, dated 30th November 1857, Paris, refer to Mrs. Orr's narrow escape from Aurungabad, owing to the fidelity of Sheik Boran Bukh, in the time of the Mutiny. It is a good example of the ease with which Leighton threw himself into the atmosphere of a situation. It reads like the writing of an Oriental!

MOST VALUED FRIEND,—The report of your gallant and generous conduct towards my sister and the companions of her flight has reached my ears, not only by private letters but also through several of the first English newspapers. From one end of this country to another, Englishmen have read the account of your loyal bearing, and from one end of the country to the other there has been but one voice to praise and to admire it; for uprightness and fidelity are precious in the eyes of all Englishmen, and honour and courage are to them as the breath of life; but *my* feelings towards you are naturally doubly warm and grateful, for to your care and vigilance I owe the safety of a most precious and valued life, that of a beloved sister. It is to express to you this gratitude that I now write, and also to beg you to accept as a small token of my regard a shawl which I send together with this letter, and which will be as a sign to cement our new friendship. Wear it in remembrance of that perilous night at Aurungabad, and in wearing it remember that on that night your fidelity won for you many new friends, and amongst the truest and most sincere count the brother of Mrs. Orr.

FRED LEIGHTON.

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To FREDERICK LEIGHTON, Esq., &c. &c.

AURUNGABAD, 13*th July* 1858.

MOST RESPECTED SIR,—I beg to return you my humble and hearty thanks for your kindness in having sent me a revolving pistol, which was highly admired by all who saw it. I cannot be sufficiently thankful to your invaluable kindness. I shall not part with it till death, but keep it as a remembrance of your high estimation of me your unworthy servant, and ever pray for your and family's welfare and happiness.

I feel very uneasy in not hearing from Captain Orr since he left us; I beg you will kindly let me know how he is getting on, as I hear that he is not altogether very well. I was very anxious to accompany him, and he agreed to take me, but on second consideration he changed his mind. I hope some day or other to be able to see you and family by God's grace.

I conclude, sir, with my humble respects and good wishes to self and family. Hoping all's well.—I am, Sir, your most obedient and grateful servant,

SHEIK BORAN BUKH, *Silladar.*

Thursday.

DEAR PAPA,—In accordance with your request, yesterday received, I enclose an envelope for B. B., on which perhaps you will be so good as to add his rank, whatever that may be—I believe Subahdar. I am glad the letter is right, and knowing your great epistolary facilities, I don't feel as sorry as I ought to have interfered with your design. I don't think it will fall heavily on you.

I have a great favour to ask of you; and I feel sure you won't grudge it me, as it concerns a man whose house is a second home to me: Cartwright—indefatigable as he is, he keeps constantly on the alert for any vacancy in Parliament, and is in frequent communication with Hayter on the subject. Now the representation of *Scarborough* has just become vacant, and I should take it as the greatest kindness if you would write

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to that great friend of yours in that town (a banker—whose name I, if I were to sit on my head, I could not remember; but you know), mentioning Cartwright as a great friend and most appropriate man. He (your friend) is sure to be very influential amongst the townsfolk. I should wish you to say this: state who Cartwright is, his family, place (Aynhoe Park, Brackley), his relations *with Hayter the Whipper-in* (that he may not appear *tombé des nues*), and the following creed: Pledge himself to Reform Bill with extension of franchise; considers the Educational question amongst the most important of the day; wants a thorough inquiry into India and Indian affairs (government), and is prepared to support Lord Palmerston's administration. All this is very important to mention, because *all his relations* are hot Tories. Also, in case your friend should accept the suggestion and want to communicate *at once* Cartwright, give his (C.'s) direction in Paris, *No.* 5 *Rue Roquépine.* Will you do this for me?

Please give dear Mamma a wigging for expressing no pleasure at the prospect I hinted at of running over to Bath for a day or two in the winter; tell her if she does not behave better I won't come. I would write at greater length, but my model is waiting, and I have no time.—With anticipated thanks, your affectionate son, FRED.

It was in the year 1857 that Leighton painted the beautiful figure of "Salome, the Daughter of Herodias," which apparently was never exhibited in any exhibition of his works till that of 1897. A sketch (see List of Illustrations) made for the picture is in the Leighton House Collection, also other drawings of dancing figures sketched in Algiers.

To his mother he wrote in the beginning of 1858:—

MONDAY, *Jan.* 1858.

DEAREST MAMMA,—Many thanks for your nice long letter, which I had been anxiously expecting not only for news of yourself but to

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STUDY FOR "SALOME, THE DAUGHTER OF HERODIAS." 1857

Leighton House Collection

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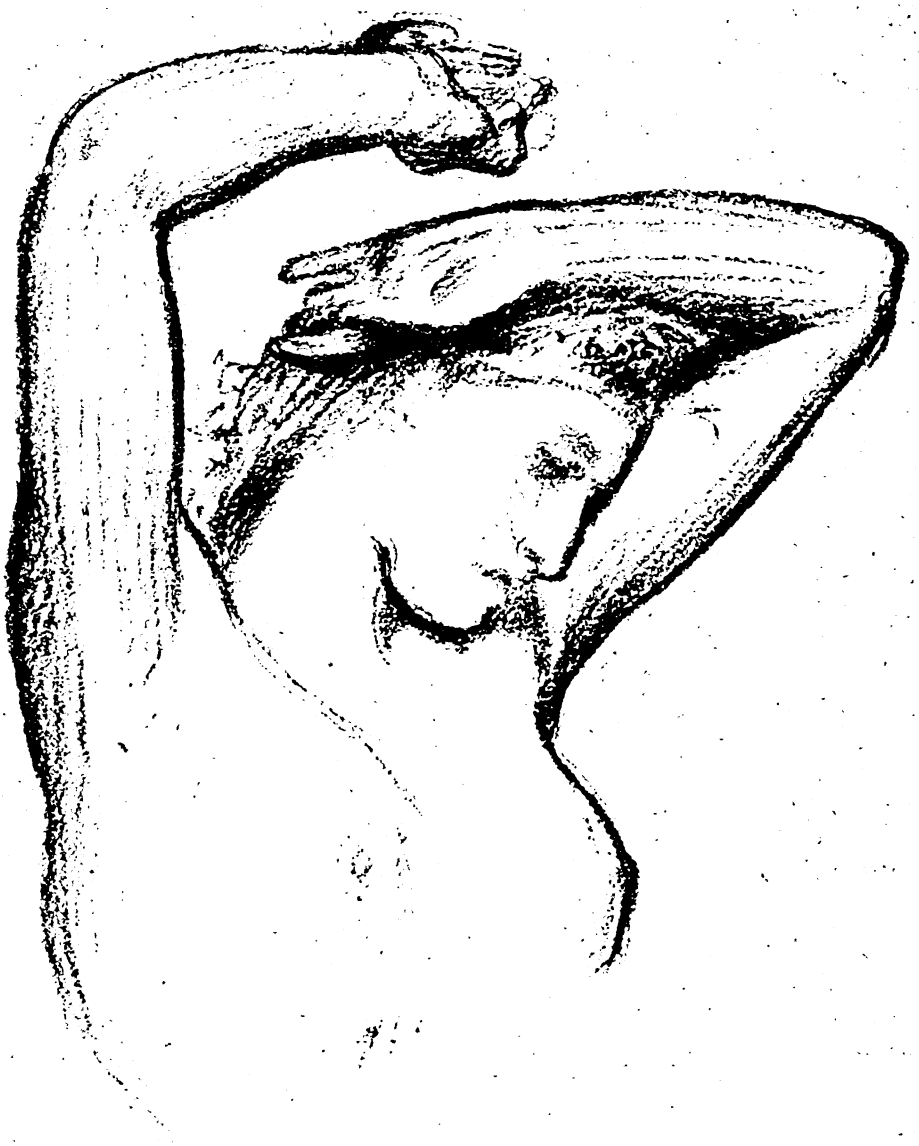

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hear what tidings had reached you from India. I am so glad dear Lina continues tolerably well considering her position. I can fully understand how dreadfully anxious poor Sutherland must have been the whole time about her. I mean to write to her myself without delay. Will you please let me have her present direction, as I don't know it? How kind Sutherland is to have remembered at such a moment about my tigerskin! What an excellent and thoughtful creature he must be! The extract from Brig. Stuart's despatch is most gratifying and satisfactory, but I want to see it in print; where is it published? can't you somehow get it and let me have it? I have the greatest desire to possess it in that shape. What a nice letter Booran Buckh's is. I am afraid that about the regiment returning to Aurungabad is a hope not very likely to be realised. There is still a frightful deal to do in Oude. Sir Colin wants men sadly, and cavalry is particularly precious.

Mario's *étrenne* cost me a pound, it was the least I could do. Let me reassure you, dear Mamma, about my behaviour to that amiable creature. I have been at his house often since, and am sure he is not in the least hurt; as for his thinking I was proud about his being an actor, that is so out of the question that I could not help laughing when I read the passage in your letter. In the first place, he would never dream of suspecting me of such a piece of vulgarity, and in the next, actor or no, he still is Count Candia, and therefore more than my equal in rank.

I hope I may be with you somewhere about the 6th or 7th February, and should stay till the 10th or 11th. It would be humbug to say that I should not rather find you alone than in a whirlpool of funereal gaieties; but, however, I am at your disposal; do with me as you wish. I have been suffering very much of late from tooth and face ache. I am rather better now, thanks to, or in spite of, homœopathy.

Lady Cowley I have never found in yet. The Embassy parties have not begun yet. I go out almost every evening, but only in a circle of four or five houses. I can't stay at home, my eyes are too weak to do anything, I am sorry to say; I have not opened a book this winter. The Hollands are going to Naples, to my great regret; they were very kind; poor Lady Holland has only just recovered from a very serious illness.

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You tell me to bring over my Algerine sketches, but I have very little to show, a few scratches only of types; my two principal studies are *in oils;* I can't well take those over. I am working away at my pictures as well as the pitch-dark weather allows (which is very badly); however, I hope they may turn out well. The silent Sartoris said to-day he thought my Juliet picture "safe to succeed."

Good-bye, dear Mamma; best love to all from your most affect. boy, FRED.

END OF VOL. I

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"BLIND SCHOLAR AND DAUGHTER"

No. 1. "Romola"

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NELLO'S SHOP: "SUPPOSE YOU LET ME LOOK AT MYSELF"

No. 2. "Romola"

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"THE FIRST KEY"
No. 5. "Romola"

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"THE PEASANTS' FAIR"

No. 6. "Romola"

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"THE DYING MESSAGE"

No. 7. "Romola"

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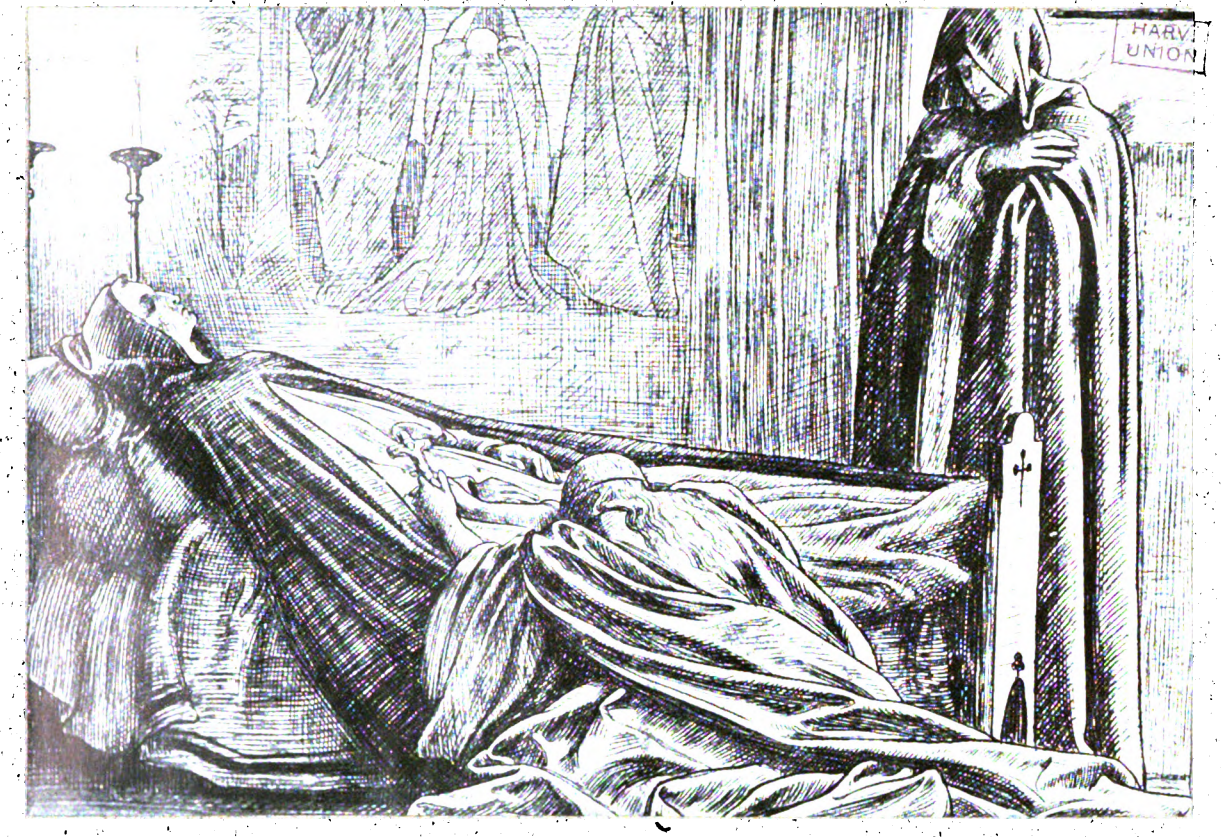

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"FLORENTINE JOKE"
No. 8. "Romola"

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"THE ESCAPED PRISONER"
No. 9. "Romola"

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"NICCOLO AT WORK"
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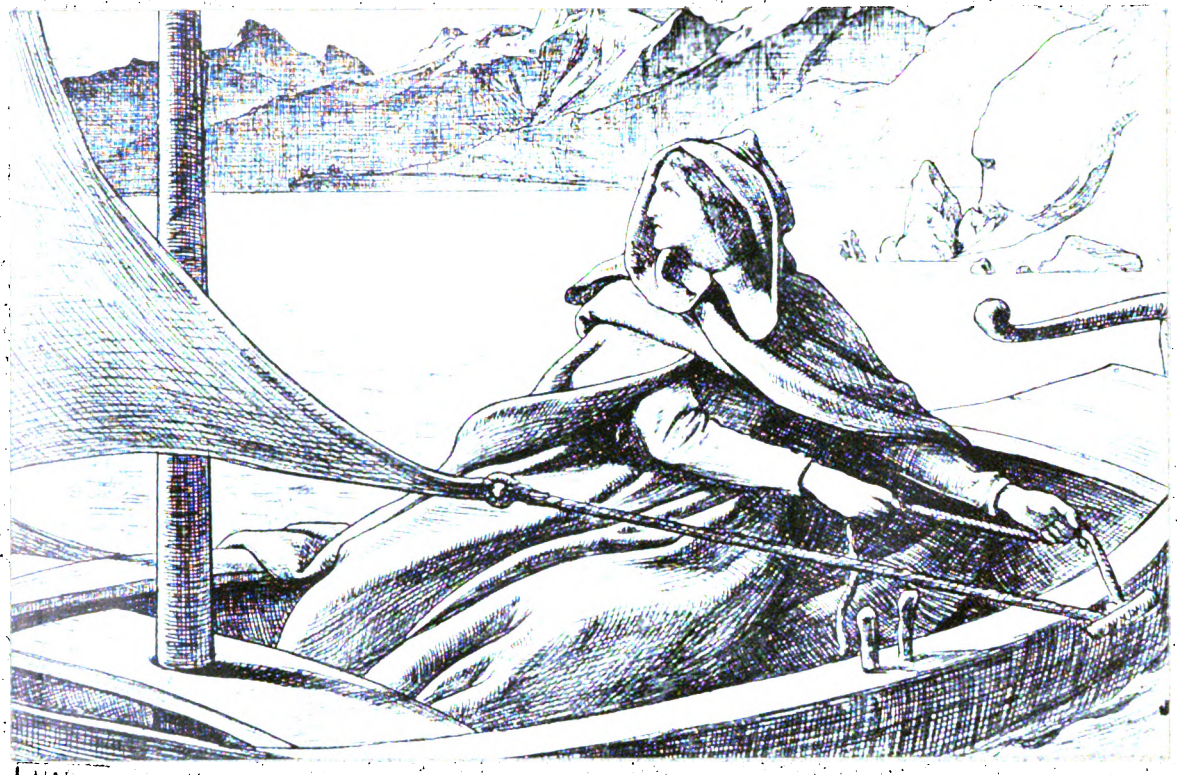

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